THE VIRGINIANS

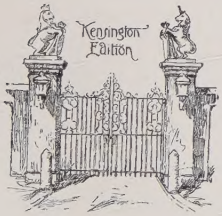
A TALE OF THE LAST CENTURY

BY

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

WITH THE AUTHOR'S ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME I



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NOTE TO THE KENSINGTON EDITION

In the spring of 1856 Thackeray returned from a second visit to America, where this time he had delivered the lectures on the Four Georges; and for more than a year after his return undertook no important work. The interval was partly occupied with repeating the lectures in England and Scotland, and with political plans, ending in July, 1857, with his unsuccessful candidacy for a seat in Parliament for Oxford. There are traces in his letters of depression over his silence: "Shall I ever write a book again? Some day, please God, when these astonishing Georges have put a few thousands more into my pocket" (January, 1857). "Just when the novel-writing faculty is pretty well used up," etc. (February). But after the election was over he began with an apparent revival of cheerfulness the actual writing of The Virginians, the conception of which dated from his American visit. It was a book to appear first in the old form in numbers, extending over two years (November, 1857, to October, 1859), and with the old Bradbury & Evans imprint; later to take permanent shape in volumes with Smith, Elder & Company.

Of the history of its writing (chiefly in his house in

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Onslow Square, though one or two of the later numbers were written during little journeys with his daughters on the Continent) we have fewer details, and these of less interest, than in the case of the earlier books. Mr. Motley tells in his Letters of finding Thackeray in the British Museum working on one of his numbers; and a comment which he makes shows that to him, as to so many others, the habit of writing just behind the presses —number by number, on a novel already publishing, as Thackeray and Dickens did—seemed a torturing process. Mrs. Ritchie has printed some fragments from her father's note-books, but they show only the collection of historical details; and in such letters as we have of his at this time there are comparatively few of those allusions to the work in hand which bring us so near to others of the novels.

THE portrait used as the frontispiece is from a photograph taken in 1852 and now in the possession of Mrs. James T. Fields, by whose kind permission it is reproduced for this edition. The frontispiece of the second volume is from a drawing of the house at 36 Onslow Square. It is noteworthy in the bibliographical history of THE VIRGINIANS that it was the last of his novels illustrated throughout by Thackeray himself; and one of his own best-known drawings is retained as the frontispiece of Volume III. The original title-pages and cover-design of the numbers are given, as in previous cases, after this note.

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THE VIRGINIANS

A TALE OF THE LAST CENTURY.

BY W. M. THACKERAY.

[*Fac-simile of the Cover-design of the Original Numbers.*]

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THE VIRGINIANS
VOL.
I

THE VIRGINIANS

VOL. 2

TO

SIR HENRY DAVISON

CHIEF JUSTICE OF MADRAS

THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED

BY

AN AFFECTIONATE OLD FRIEND

London, September 7, 1859.

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From a photograph in the possession of Mrs. James T. Fields. Reproduced by permission for the Kensington Edition.

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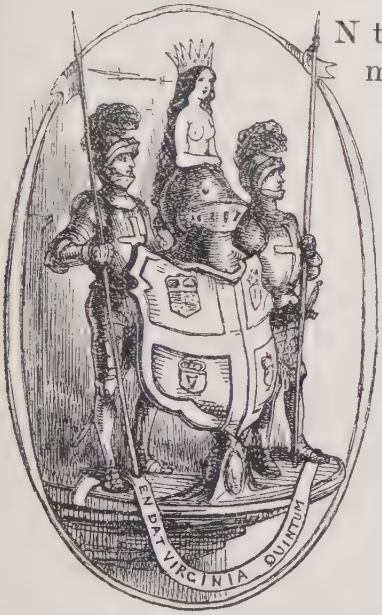
THE VIRGINIANS

CHAPTER I

IN WHICH ONE OF THE VIRGINIANS VISITS HOME



IN the library wall of one of the most famous writers of America, there hang two crossed swords, which his relatives wore in the great War of Independence. The one sword was gallantly drawn in the service of the king, the other was the weapon of a brave and honoured republican soldier. The possessor of the harmless trophy has earned for himself a name alike honoured in his ancestors' country and his own, where genius such as his has always a peaceful welcome.

The ensuing history reminds me of yonder swords in the historian's study at Boston. In the Revolutionary War, the subjects of this story, natives of America, and children of the Old Dominion, found themselves engaged on different sides in the quarrel, coming together peaceably at its conclusion, as brethren should, their love never having materially diminished, however angrily the

contest divided them. The colonel in scarlet, and the general in blue and buff, hang side by side in the wainscoted parlour of the Warringtons, in England, where a descendant of one of the brothers has shown their portraits to me, with many of the letters which they wrote, and the books and papers which belonged to them. In the Warrington family, and to distinguish them from other personages of that respectable race, these effigies have always gone by the name of "The Virginians;" by which name their memoirs are christened.

They both of them passed much time in Europe. They lived just on the verge of that Old World from which we are drifting away so swiftly. They were familiar with many varieties of men and fortune. Their lot brought them into contact with personages of whom we read only in books, who seem alive, as I read in the Virginians' letters regarding them, whose voices I almost fancy I hear, as I read the yellow pages written scores of years since, blotted with the boyish tears of disappointed passion, dutifully despatched after famous balls and ceremonies of the grand Old World, scribbled by camp-fires, or out of prison: nay, there is one that has a bullet through it, and of which a greater portion of the text is blotted out with the blood of the bearer.

These letters had probably never been preserved, but for the affectionate thrift of one person, to whom they never failed in their dutiful correspondence. Their mother kept all her sons' letters, from the very first, in which Henry, the younger of the twins, sends his love to his brother, then ill of a sprain at his grandfather's house of Castlewood, in Virginia, and thanks his grandpapa for a horse which he rides with his tutor, down to the last, "from my beloved son," which reached her but

a few hours before her death. The venerable lady never visited Europe, save once with her parents in the reign of George the Second; took refuge in Richmond when the house of Castlewood was burned down during the war; and was called Madam Esmond ever after that event; never caring much for the name or family of Warrington, which she held in very slight estimation as compared to her own.

The letters of the Virginians, as the reader will presently see, from specimens to be shown to him, are by no means full. They are hints rather than descriptions—indications and outlines chiefly: it may be, that the present writer has mistaken the forms, and filled in the colour wrongly: but, poring over the documents, I have tried to imagine the situation of the writer, where he was, and by what persons surrounded. I have drawn the figures as I fancied they were; set down conversations as I think I might have heard them; and so, to the best of my ability, endeavoured to revivify the bygone times and people. With what success the task has been accomplished, with what profit or amusement to himself, the kind reader will please to determine.

One summer morning in the year 1756, and in the reign of his Majesty King George the Second, the "Young Rachel," Virginian ship, Edward Franks master, came up the Avon river on her happy return from her annual voyage to the Potomac. She proceeded to Bristol with the tide, and moored in the stream as near as possible to Trail's wharf, to which she was consigned. Mr. Trail, her part owner, who could survey his ship from his counting-house windows, straightway took boat and came up her side. The owner of the "Young Ra-

chel," a large grave man in his own hair, and of a demure aspect, gave the hand of welcome to Captain Franks, who stood on his deck, and congratulated the captain upon the speedy and fortunate voyage which he had made. And remarking that we ought to be thankful to heaven for its mercies, he proceeded presently to business by asking particulars relative to cargo and passengers.

Franks was a pleasant man, who loved a joke. "We have," says he, "but yonder ugly negro boy, who is fetching the trunks, and a passenger who has the state cabin to himself."

Mr. Trail looked as if he would have preferred more mercies from heaven. "Confound you, Franks, and your luck! The 'Duke William,' which came in last week, brought fourteen, and she is not half of our tonnage."

"And this passenger, who has the whole cabin, don't pay nothin'," continued the Captain. "Swear now, it will do you good, Mr. Trail, indeed it will. I have tried the medicine."

"A passenger take the whole cabin and not pay? Gracious mercy, are you a fool, Captain Franks?"

"Ask the passenger himself, for here he comes." And, as the master spoke, a young man of some nineteen years of age came up the hatchway. He had a cloak and a sword under his arm, and was dressed in deep mourning, and called out, "Gumbo, you idiot, why don't you fetch the baggage out of the cabin? Well, shipmate, our journey is ended. You will see all the little folks to-night whom you have been talking about. Give my love to Polly, and Betty, and Little Tommy; not forgetting my duty to Mrs. Franks. I thought, yesterday, the

voyage would never be done, and now I am almost sorry it is over. That little berth in my cabin looks very comfortable now I am going to leave it."

Mr. Trail scowled at the young passenger who had paid no money for his passage. He scarcely nodded his head to the stranger when Captain Franks said, "This here gentleman is Mr. Trail, sir, whose name you have a-heerd of."

"It's pretty well known in Bristol, sir," says Mr. Trail, majestically.

"And this is Mr. Warrington, Madam Esmond Warrington's son, of Castlewood," continued the Captain.

The British merchant's hat was instantly off his head, and the owner of the beaver was making a prodigious number of bows, as if a crown-prince were before him.

"Gracious powers, Mr. Warrington! This is a delight, indeed! What a crowning mercy that your voyage should have been so prosperous! You must have my boat to go on shore. Let me cordially and respectfully welcome you to England: let me shake your hand as the son of my benefactress and patroness, Mrs. Esmond Warrington, whose name is known and honoured on Bristol 'Change, I warrant you. Isn't it, Franks?"

"There's no sweeter tobacco comes from Virginia, and no better brand than the Three Castles," says Mr. Franks, drawing a great brass tobacco-box from his pocket, and thrusting a quid into his jolly mouth. "You don't know what a comfort it is, sir; you'll take to it, bless you, as you grow older. Won't he, Mr. Trail? I wish you had ten shiploads of it instead of one. You might have ten shiploads: I've told Madam Esmond so; I've rode over her plantation; she treats me like a lord when I go to the house; she don't grudge me the

best of wine, or keep me cooling my heels in the counting-room, as some folks does" (with a look at Mr. Trail). "She is a real-born lady, she is; and might have a thousand hogsheads as easy as her hundreds, if there were but hands enough."

"I have lately engaged in the Guinea trade, and could supply her ladyship with any number of healthy young negroes before next fall," said Mr. Trail, obsequiously.

"We are averse to the purchase of negroes from Africa," said the young gentleman, coldly. "My grandfather and my mother have always objected to it, and I do not like to think of selling or buying the poor wretches."

"It is for their good, my dear young sir! for their temporal and their spiritual good!" cried Mr. Trail. "And we purchase the poor creatures only for their benefit; let me talk this matter over with you at my own house. I can introduce you to a happy home, a Christian family, and a British merchant's honest fare. Can't I, Captain Franks?"

"Can't say," growled the Captain. "Never asked me to take bite or sup at your table. Asked me to psalm-singing once and to hear Mr. Ward preach: don't care for them sort of entertainments."

Not choosing to take any notice of this remark, Mr. Trail continued in his low tone: "Business is business, my dear young sir, and I know, 'tis only my duty, the duty of all of us, to cultivate the fruits of the earth in their season. As the heir of Lady Esmond's estate; for I speak, I believe, to the heir of that great property?"

The young gentleman made a bow.

"I would urge upon you, at the very earliest moment, the propriety, the duty of increasing the ample means

with which heaven has blessed you. As an honest factor, I could not do otherwise: as a prudent man, should I scruple to speak of what will tend to your profit and mine? No, my dear Mr. George."

"My name is not George; my name is Henry," said the young man as he turned his head away, and his eyes filled with tears.

"Gracious powers! what do you mean, sir? Did you not say you were my lady's heir? and is not George Esmond Warrington, Esq.—"

"Hold your tongue, you fool!" cried Mr. Franks, striking the merchant a tough blow on his sleek sides, as the young lad turned away. "Don't you see the young gentleman a-swabbing his eyes, and note his black clothes?"

"What do you mean, Captain Franks, by laying your hand on your owners? Mr. George is the heir; I know the Colonel's will well enough."

"Mr. George is there," said the Captain, pointing with his thumb to the deck.

"Where?" cries the factor.

"Mr. George is there!" reiterated the Captain, again lifting up his finger towards the top-mast, or the sky beyond. "He is dead a year, sir, come next 9th of July. He would go out with General Braddock on that dreadful business to the Belle Rivière. He and a thousand more never came back again. Every man of them was murdered as he fell. You know the Indian way, Mr. Trail?" And here the Captain passed his hand rapidly round his head. "Horrible! ain't it, sir? horrible! He was a fine young man, the very picture of this one; only his hair was black, which is now hanging in a bloody Indian wigwam. He was often and often on

board of the 'Young Rachel,' and would have his chests of books broke open on deck before they was landed. He was a shy and silent young gent: not like this one, which was the merriest, wildest young fellow, full of his songs and fun. He took on dreadful at the news; went to his bed, had that fever which lays so many of 'em by the heels along that swampy Potomac, but he's got better on the voyage: the voyage makes every one better; and, in course, the young gentleman can't be for ever a-crying after a brother who dies and leaves him a great fortune. Ever since we sighted Ireland he has been quite gay and happy, only he would go off at times, when he was most merry, saying, 'I wish my dearest Georgy could enjoy this here sight along with me,' and when you mentioned the t'other's name, you see, he couldn't stand it." And the honest Captain's own eyes filled with tears, as he turned and looked towards the object of his compassion.

Mr. Trail assumed a lugubrious countenance befitting the tragic compliment with which he prepared to greet the young Virginian; but the latter answered him very curtly, declined his offers of hospitality, and only stayed in Mr. Trail's house long enough to drink a glass of wine and to take up a sum of money of which he stood in need. But he and Captain Franks parted on the very warmest terms, and all the little crew of the "Young Rachel" cheered from the ship's side as their passenger left it.

Again and again Harry Warrington and his brother had pored over the English map, and determined upon the course which they should take upon arriving at Home. All Americans who love the old country—and what gently-nurtured man or woman of Anglo-Saxon

race does not?—have ere this rehearsed their English travels, and visited in fancy the spots with which their hopes, their parents' fond stories, their friends' descriptions, have rendered them familiar. There are few things to me more affecting in the history of the quarrel which divided the two great nations than the recurrence of that word Home, as used by the younger towards the elder country. Harry Warrington had his chart laid out. Before London, and its glorious temples of St. Paul's and St. Peter's; its grim Tower, where the brave and loyal had shed their blood, from Wallace down to Balmerino and Kilmarnock, pitied by gentle hearts;—before the awful window at Whitehall, whence the martyr Charles had issued, to kneel once more, and then ascend to heaven;—before Playhouses, Parks, and Palaces, wondrous resorts of wit, pleasure, and splendour;—before Shakspeare's Resting-place under the tall spire which rises by Avon, amidst the sweet Warwickshire pastures;—before Derby, and Falkirk, and Culloden, where the cause of honour and loyalty had fallen, it might be to rise no more:—before all these points in their pilgrimage there was one which the young Virginian brothers held even more sacred, and that was the home of their family,—that old Castlewood in Hampshire, about which their parents had talked so fondly. From Bristol to Bath, from Bath to Salisbury, to Winchester, to Hexton, to *Home;* they knew the way, and had mapped the journey many and many a time.

We must fancy our American traveller to be a handsome young fellow, whose suit of sables only made him look the more interesting. The plump landlady from her bar, surrounded by her china and punch-bowls, and

stout gilded bottles of strong waters, and glittering rows of silver flagons, looked kindly after the young gentleman as he passed through the inn-hall from his post-chaise, and the obsequious chamberlain bowed him up stairs to the " Rose " or the " Dolphin." The trim chambermaid dropped her best curtsey for his fee, and Gumbo, in the inn-kitchen, where the townsfolk drank their mug of ale by the great fire, bragged of his young master's splendid house in Virginia, and of the immense wealth to which he was heir. The post-chaise whirled the traveller through the most delightful home-scenery his eyes had ever lighted on. If English landscape is pleasant to the American of the present day, who must needs contrast the rich woods and glowing pastures and picturesque ancient villages of the old country with the rough aspect of his own, how much pleasanter must Harry Warrington's course have been, whose journeys had lain through swamps and forest solitudes from one Virginian ordinary to another log-house at the end of the day's route, and who now lighted suddenly upon the busy, happy, splendid scene of English summer? And the high-road, a hundred years ago, was not that grass-grown desert of the present time. It was alive with constant travel and traffic: the country towns and inns swarmed with life and gaiety. The ponderous wagon, with its bells and plodding team; the light post-coach that achieved the journey from the " White Hart," Salisbury, to the " Swan with Two Necks," London, in two days; the strings of pack-horses that had not yet left the road; my lord's gilt post-chaise and six, with the outriders galloping on ahead; the country squire's great coach and heavy Flanders mares; the farmers trotting to market, or the parson jolting to the cathedral

town on Dumpling, his wife behind on the pillion—all these crowding sights and brisk people greeted the young traveller on his summer journey. Hodge the farmer's boy took off his hat, and Polly the milk-maid bobbed a curtsey, as the chaise whirled over the pleasant village-green, and the white-headed children lifted their chubby faces and cheered. The church-spires glistened with gold, the cottage-gables glared in sunshine, the great elms murmured in summer, or cast purple shadows over the grass. Young Warrington never had had such a glorious day, or witnessed a scene so delightful. To be nineteen years of age, with high health, high spirits, and a full purse, to be making your first journey, and rolling through the country in a post-chaise at nine miles an hour—O happy youth! almost it makes one young to think of him! But Harry was too eager to give more than a passing glance at the Abbey at Bath, or gaze with more than a moment's wonder at the mighty Minster at Salisbury. Until he beheld *Home* it seemed to him he had no eyes for any other place.

At last the young gentleman's post-chaise drew up at the rustic inn on Castlewood Green, of which his grandsire had many a time talked to him, and which bears as its ensign, swinging from an elm near the inn porch, the Three Castles of the Esmond family. They had a sign, too, over the gateway of Castlewood House, bearing the same cognizance. This was the hatchment of Francis, Lord Castlewood, who now lay in the chapel hard by, his son reigning in his stead.

Harry Warrington had often heard of Francis, Lord Castlewood. It was for Frank's sake, and for his great love towards the boy, that Colonel Esmond determined to forego his claim to the English estates and rank of his

family, and retired to Virginia. The young man had led a wild youth; he had fought with distinction under Marlborough; he had married a foreign lady, and most lamentably adopted her religion. At one time he had been a Jacobite (for loyalty to the sovereign was ever hereditary in the Esmond family), but had received some slight or injury from the Prince, which had caused him to rally to King George's side. He had, on his second marriage, renounced the errors of Popery which he had temporarily embraced, and returned to the Established Church again. He had, from his constant support of the King and the Minister of the time being, been rewarded by his Majesty King George II., and died an English peer. An earl's coronet now figured on the hatchment which hung over Castlewood gate—and there was an end of the jolly gentleman. Between Colonel Esmond, who had become his stepfather, and his lordship there had ever been a brief but affectionate correspondence—on the Colonel's part especially, who loved his stepson, and had a hundred stories to tell about him to his grandchildren. Madam Esmond, however, said *she* could see nothing in her half-brother. He was dull, except when he drank too much wine, and that, to be sure, was every day at dinner. Then he was boisterous, and his conversation not pleasant. He was good-looking—yes—a fine tall stout animal; she had rather her boys should follow a different model. In spite of the grandfather's encomium of the late lord, the boys had no very great respect for their kinsman's memory. The lads and their mother were staunch Jacobites, though having every respect for his present Majesty; but right was right, and nothing could make their hearts swerve from their allegiance to the descendants of the martyr Charles.

With a beating heart Harry Warrington walked from the inn towards the house where his grandsire's youth had been passed. The little village-green of Castlewood slopes down towards the river, which is spanned by an old bridge of a single broad arch, and from this the ground rises gradually towards the house, grey with many gables and buttresses, and backed by a darkling wood. An old man sat at the wicket on a stone bench in front of the great arched entrance to the house, over which the earl's hatchment was hanging. An old dog was crouched at the man's feet. Immediately above the ancient sentry at the gate was an open casement with some homely flowers in the window, from behind which good-humoured girls' faces were peeping. They were watching the young traveller dressed in black as he walked up gazing towards the castle, and the ebony attendant who followed the gentleman's steps also accoutred in mourning. So was he at the gate in mourning, and the girls when they came out had black ribbons.

To Harry's surprise, the old man accosted him by his name. "You have had a nice ride to Hexton, Master Harry, and the sorrel carried you well."

"I think you must be Lockwood," said Harry, with rather a tremulous voice, holding out his hand to the old man. His grandfather had often told him of Lockwood, and how he had accompanied the Colonel and the young Viscount in Marlborough's wars forty years ago. The veteran seemed puzzled by the mark of affection which Harry extended to him. The old dog gazed at the new comer, and then went and put his head between his knees. "I have heard of you often. How did you know my name?"

"They say I forget most things," says the old man,

with a smile; "but I ain't so bad as that quite. Only this morning, when you went out, my darter says, 'Father, do you know why you have a black coat on?' 'In course I know why I have a black coat,' says I. 'My lord is dead. They say 'twas a foul blow, and Master Frank is my lord now, and Master Harry'—why, what have you done since you've went out this morning? Why, you have a grow'd taller and changed your hair—though I know—I know you."

One of the young women had tripped out by this time from the porter's lodge, and dropped the stranger a pretty curtsey. "Grandfather sometimes does not recollect very well," she said, pointing to her head. "Your honour seems to have heard of Lockwood?"

"And you, have you never heard of Colonel Henry Esmond?"

"He was Captain and Major in Webb's Foot, and I was with him in two campaigns, sure enough," cries Lockwood. "Wasn't I, Ponto?"

"The Colonel as married Viscountess Rachel, my late lord's mother? and went to live amongst the Indians? We have heard of him. Sure we have his picture in our gallery, and hisself painted it."

"Went to live in Virginia, and died there seven years ago, and I am his grandson."

"Lord, your honour! Why, your honour's skin's as white as mine," cries Molly. "Grandfather, do you hear this? His honour is Colonel Esmond's grandson that used to send you tobacco, and his honour have come all the way from Virginia."

"To see you, Lockwood," says the young man, "and the family. I only set foot on English ground yesterday, and my first visit is for home. I may see the house,

though the family are from home?" Molly dared to say Mrs. Barker would let his honour see the house, and Harry Warrington made his way across the court, seeming to know the place as well as if he had been born there, Miss Molly thought, who followed, accompanied by Mr. Gumbo making her a profusion of polite bows and speeches.

CHAPTER II

IN WHICH HARRY HAS TO PAY FOR HIS SUPPER

COLONEL ESMOND'S grandson rang for a while at his ancestors' house of Castlewood, before any one within seemed inclined to notice his summons. The servant, who at length issued from the door, seemed to be very little affected by the announcement that the visitor was a relation of the family. The family was away, and in their absence John cared very little for their relatives, but was eager to get back to his game at cards with Thomas in the window-seat. The housekeeper was busy getting ready for my lord and my lady, who were expected that evening. Only by strong entreaties could Harry gain leave to see my lady's sitting-room and the picture-room, where, sure enough, was a portrait of his grandfather in periwig and breastplate, the counterpart of their picture in Virginia, and a likeness of his grandmother, as Lady Castlewood, in a yet earlier habit of Charles II.'s time; her neck bare, her fair golden hair waving over

her shoulders in ringlets which he remembered to have seen snowy white. From the contemplation of these sights the sulky housekeeper drove him. Her family was about to arrive. There was my lady the Countess, and my lord and his brother, and the young ladies and the Baroness, who was to have the state bedroom. Who was the Baroness? The Baroness Bernstein, the young ladies' aunt. Harry wrote down his name on a paper from his own pocket-book, and laid it on a table in the hall. "Henry Esmond Warrington, of Castlewood in Virginia, arrived in England yesterday—staying at the 'Three Castles' in the village." The lackeys rose up from their cards to open the door to him, in order to get their "vails," and Gumbo quitted the bench at the gate, where he had been talking with old Lockwood the porter, who took Harry's guinea, hardly knowing the meaning of the gift. During the visit to the home of his fathers, Harry had only seen little Polly's countenance that was the least unselfish or kindly; he walked away, not caring to own how disappointed he was, and what a damp had been struck upon him by the aspect of the place. They ought to have known him. Had any of them ridden up to his house in Virginia, whether the master were present or absent, the guests would have been made welcome, and, in sight of his ancestors' hall, he had to go and ask for a dish of bacon and eggs at a country ale-house!

After his dinner, he went to the bridge and sat on it, looking towards the old house, behind which the sun was descending as the rooks came cawing home to their nests in the elms. His young fancy pictured itself many of the ancestors of whom his mother and grandsire had told him. He fancied knights and hunts-

men crossing the ford—cavaliers of King Charles's days; my Lord Castlewood, his grandmother's first husband, riding out with hawk and hound. The recollection of his dearest lost brother came back to him as he indulged in these reveries, and smote him with a pang of exceeding tenderness and longing, insomuch that the young man hung his head and felt his sorrow renewed for the dear friend and companion with whom, until of late, all his pleasures and griefs had been shared. As he sat plunged in his own thoughts, which were mingled up with the mechanical clinking of the blacksmith's forge hard by, the noises of the evening, the talk of the rooks, and the calling of the birds, round about—a couple of young men on horseback dashed over the bridge. One of them, with an oath, called him a fool, and told him to keep out of the way—the other, who fancied he might have jostled the foot-passenger, and possibly might have sent him over the parapet, pushed on more quickly when he reached the other side of the water, calling likewise to Tom to come on; and the pair of young gentlemen were up the hill on their way to the house before Harry had recovered himself from his surprise at their appearance, and wrath at their behaviour. In a minute or two, this advanced guard was followed by two livery servants on horseback, who scowled at the young traveller on the bridge a true British welcome of Curse you, who are you? After these, in a minute or two, came a coach-and-six, a ponderous vehicle having need of the horses which drew it, and containing three ladies, a couple of maids, and an armed man on a seat behind the carriage. Three handsome pale faces looked out at Harry Warrington as the carriage passed over the bridge, and did not return the salute which, recognizing the family arms,

A Welcome to Old England

he gave it. The gentleman behind the carriage glared at him haughtily. Harry felt terribly alone. He thought he would go back to Captain Franks. The "Rachel" and her little tossing cabin seemed a cheery spot in comparison to that on which he stood. The inn folks did not know his name of Warrington. They told him that was my lady in the coach, with her step-daughter, my Lady Maria, and her daughter, my Lady Fanny; and the young gentleman in the grey frock was Mr. William, and he with powder on the chestnut was my lord. It was the latter had sworn the loudest, and called him a fool; and it was the grey frock which had nearly galloped Harry into the ditch.

The landlord of the "Three Castles" had shown Harry a bed-chamber, but he had refused to have his portmanteaux unpacked, thinking that, for a certainty, the folks at the great house would invite him to theirs. One, two, three hours passed, and there came no invitation. Harry was fain to have his trunks open at last, and to call for his slippers and gown. Just before dark, about two hours after the arrival of the first carriage, a second chariot with four horses had passed over the bridge, and a stout, high-coloured lady, with a very dark pair of eyes, had looked hard at Mr. Warrington. That was the Baroness Bernstein, the landlady said, my lord's aunt, and Harry remembered the first Lady Castlewood had come of a German family. Earl, and Countess, and Baroness, and postilions, and gentlemen and horses, had all disappeared behind the castle gate, and Harry was fain to go to bed at last, in the most melancholy mood and with a cruel sense of neglect and loneliness in his young heart. He could not sleep, and, besides, ere long, heard a prodigious noise, and cursing, and giggling, and

screaming from my landlady's bar, which would have served to keep him awake.

Then Gumbo's voice was heard without, remonstrating, "You cannot go in, sar—my master asleep, sar!" but a shrill voice, with many oaths, which Harry Warrington recognized, cursed Gumbo for a stupid, negro woolly pate, and he was pushed aside, giving entrance to a flood of oaths into the room, and a young gentleman behind them.

"Beg your pardon, Cousin Warrington," cried the young blasphemer, "are you asleep? Beg your pardon for riding you over on the bridge. Didn't know you—course shouldn't have done it—thought it was a lawyer with a writ—dressed in black, you know. Gad! thought it was Nathan come to nab me." And Mr. William laughed incoherently. It was evident that he was excited with liquor.

"You did me great honour to mistake me for a sheriff's officer, cousin," says Harry, with great gravity, sitting up in his tall nightcap.

"Gad! I thought it was Nathan, and was going to send you souse into the river. But I ask your pardon. You see I had been drinking at the 'Bell' at Hexton, and the punch is good at the 'Bell' at Hexton. Hullo, you Davis! a bowl of punch; d'you hear?"

"I have had my share for to-night, cousin, and I should think you have," Harry continues, always in the dignified style.

"You want me to go, Cousin What's-your-name, I see," Mr. William said, with gravity. "You want me to go, and they want me to come, and I didn't want to come. I said, I'd see him hanged first,—that's what I said. Why should I trouble myself to come down all

alone of an evening, and look after a fellow I don't care a pin for? Zackly what I said. Zackly what Castlewood said. Why the devil should he go down? Castlewood says, and so said my lady, but the Baroness would have you. It's all the Baroness's doing, and if she says a thing it must be done; so you must just get up and come." Mr. Esmond delivered these words with the most amiable rapidity and indistinctness, running them into one another, and tacking about the room as he spoke. But the young Virginian was in great wrath. "I tell you what, cousin," he cried, "I won't move for the Countess, or for the Baroness, or for all the cousins in Castlewood." And when the landlord entered the chamber with the bowl of punch, which Mr. Esmond had ordered, the young gentleman in bed called out fiercely to the host, to turn that sot out of the room.

"Sot, you little tobacconist! Sot, you Cherokee!" screams out Mr. William. "Jump out of bed, and I'll drive my sword through your body. Why didn't I do it to-day when I took you for a bailiff—a confounded pettifogging bum-bailiff?" And he went on screeching more oaths and incoherences, until the landlord, the drawer, the hostler, and all the folks of the kitchen were brought to lead him away. After which Harry Warrington closed his tent round him in sulky wrath, and, no doubt, finally went fast to sleep.

My landlord was very much more obsequious on the next morning when he met his young guest, having now fully learned his name and quality. Other messengers had come from the castle on the previous night to bring both the young gentlemen home, and poor Mr. William, it appeared, had returned in a wheelbarrow, being not

altogether unaccustomed to that mode of conveyance. "He never remembers nothin' about it the next day. He is of a real kind nature, Mr. William," the landlord vowed, "and the men get crowns and half-crowns from him by saying that he beat them overnight when he was in liquor. He's the devil when he's tipsy, Mr. William, but when he is sober he is the very kindest of young gentlemen."

As nothing is unknown to writers of biographies of the present kind, it may be as well to state what had occurred within the walls of Castlewood House, whilst Harry Warrington was without, awaiting some token of recognition from his kinsmen. On their arrival at home the family had found the paper on which the lad's name was inscribed, and his appearance occasioned a little domestic council. My Lord Castlewood supposed that must have been the young gentleman whom they had seen on the bridge, and as they had not drowned him they must invite him. Let a man go down with the proper messages, let a servant carry a note. Lady Fanny thought it would be more civil if one of the brothers would go to their kinsman, especially considering the original greeting which they had given. Lord Castlewood had not the slightest objection to his brother William going—yes, William should go. Upon this Mr. William said (with a yet stronger expression) that he would be hanged if he would go. Lady Maria thought the young gentleman whom they had remarked at the bridge was a pretty fellow enough. Castlewood is dreadfully dull, I am sure neither of my brothers do anything to make it amusing. He may be vulgar—no doubt he is vulgar—but let us see the American. Such was Lady Maria's opinion. Lady Castlewood was

neither for inviting nor for refusing him, but for delaying. "Wait till your aunt comes, children; perhaps the Baroness won't like to see the young man; at least, let us consult her before we ask him." And so the hospitality to be offered by his nearest kinsfolk to poor Harry Warrington remained yet in abeyance.

At length the equipage of the Baroness Bernstein made its appearance, and whatever doubt there might be as to the reception of the Virginian stranger, there was no lack of enthusiasm in this generous family regarding their wealthy and powerful kinswoman. The state-chamber had already been prepared for her. The cook had arrived the previous day with instructions to get ready a supper for her such as her ladyship liked. The table sparkled with old plate, and was set in the oak dining-room with the pictures of the family round the walls. There was the late Viscount, his father, his mother, his sister,—these two lovely pictures. There was his predecessor by Vandyck, and his Viscountess. There was Colonel Esmond, their relative in Virginia, about whose grandson the ladies and gentlemen of the Esmond family showed such a very moderate degree of sympathy.

The feast set before their aunt, the Baroness, was a very good one, and her ladyship enjoyed it. The supper occupied an hour or two, during which the whole Castlewood family were most attentive to their guest. The Countess pressed all the good dishes upon her, of which she freely partook: the butler no sooner saw her glass empty than he filled it with champagne: the young folks and their mother kept up the conversation, not so much by talking, as by listening appropriately to their friend. She was full of spirits and humour. She seemed to

know everybody in Europe, and about those everybodies the wickedest stories. The Countess of Castlewood, ordinarily a very demure, severe woman, and a stickler for the proprieties, smiled at the very worst of these anecdotes; the girls looked at one another and laughed at the maternal signal; the boys giggled and roared with especial delight at their sisters' confusion. They also partook freely of the wine which the butler handed round, nor did they, or their guest, disdain the bowl of smoking punch, which was laid on the table after the supper. Many and many a night, the Baroness said, she had drunk at that table by her father's side. "That was his place," she pointed to the place where the Countess now sat. She saw none of the old plate. That was all melted to pay his gambling debts. She hoped, "Young gentlemen, that *you* don't play?"

"Never, on my word," says Castlewood.

"Never, 'pon honour," says Will, winking at his brother.

The Baroness was very glad to hear they were such good boys. Her face grew redder with the punch; and she became voluble, might have been thought coarse, but that times were different, and those critics were inclined to be especially favourable.

She talked to the boys about their father, their grandfather—other men and women of the house. "The only man of the family was *that,*" she said, pointing (with an arm that was yet beautifully round and white) towards the picture of the military gentleman in the red coat and cuirass, and great black periwig.

"The Virginian? What is he good for? I always thought he was good for nothing but to cultivate tobacco and my grandmother," says my lord, laughing.

She struck her hand upon the table with an energy that made the glasses dance. "I say he was the best of you all. There never was one of the male Esmonds that had more brains than a goose, except him. He was not fit for this wicked, selfish old world of ours, and he was right to go and live out of it. Where would your father have been, young people, but for him?"

"Was he particularly kind to our papa?" says Lady Maria.

"Old stories, my dear Maria!" cries the Countess. "I am sure my dear Earl was very kind to him in giving him that great estate in Virginia."

"Since his brother's death, the lad who has been here to-day is heir to that. Mr. Draper told me so! Peste! I don't know why my father gave up such a property."

"*Who* has been here to-day?" asked the Baroness, highly excited.

"Harry Esmond Warrington, of Virginia," my lord answered: "a lad whom Will nearly pitched into the river, and whom I pressed my lady the Countess to invite to stay here."

"You mean that one of the Virginian boys has been to Castlewood, and has not been asked to stay here?"

"There is but one of them, my dear creature," interposes the Earl. "The other, you know, has just been—"

"For shame, for shame!"

"Oh! it ain't pleasant, I confess, to be sc——"

"Do you mean that a grandson of Henry Esmond, the master of this house, has been here, and none of you have offered him hospitality?"

"Since we didn't know it, and he is staying at the Castles?" interposes Will.

"That he is staying at the Inn, and you are sitting

there!" cries the old lady. "This is too bad—call somebody to me. Get me my hood—I'll go to the boy myself. Come with me this instant, my Lord Castlewood."

The young man rose up, evidently in wrath. "Madame the Baroness of Bernstein," he said, "your ladyship is welcome to go; but as for me, I don't choose to have such words as 'shameful' applied to my conduct. I *won't* go and fetch the young gentleman from Virginia, and I propose to sit here and finish this bowl of punch. Eugene! Don't Eugene me, madam. I know her ladyship has a great deal of money, which you are desirous should remain in our amiable family. You want it more than I do. Cringe for it—I won't." And he sank back in his chair.

The Baroness looked at the family, who held their heads down, and then at my lord, but this time without any dislike. She leaned over to him, and said rapidly in German, "I had unright when I said the Colonel was the only man of the family. Thou canst, if thou willest, Eugene." To which remark my lord only bowed.

"If you do not wish an old woman to go out at this hour of the night, let William, at least, go and fetch his cousin," said the Baroness.

"The very thing I proposed to him."

"And so did we—and so did we!" cried the daughters in a breath.

"I am sure, I only wanted the dear Baroness's consent!" said their mother, "and shall be charmed for my part to welcome our young relative."

"Will! Put on thy pattens, and get a lantern, and go fetch the Virginian," said my lord.

"And we will have another bowl of punch when he comes," says William, who by this time had already had

too much. And he went forth—how we have seen; and how he had more punch; and how ill he succeeded in his embassy.

The worthy lady of Castlewood, as she caught sight of young Harry Warrington by the river side, must have seen a very handsome and interesting youth, and very likely had reasons of her own for not desiring his presence in her family. All mothers are not eager to encourage the visits of interesting youths of nineteen in families where there are virgins of twenty. If Harry's acres had been in Norfolk or Devon, in place of Virginia, no doubt the good Countess would have been rather more eager in her welcome. Had she wanted him, she would have given him her hand readily enough. If our people of ton are selfish, at any rate they show they are selfish; and, being cold-hearted, at least have no hypocrisy of affection.

Why should Lady Castlewood put herself out of the way to welcome the young stranger? Because he was friendless? Only a simpleton could ever imagine such a reason as that. People of fashion, like her ladyship, are friendly to those who have plenty of friends. A poor lad, alone, from a distant country, with only very moderate means, and those not as yet in his own power, with uncouth manners very likely, and coarse provincial habits; was a great lady called upon to put herself out of the way for such a youth? *Allons donc!* He was quite as well at the ale-house as at the castle.

This, no doubt, was her ladyship's opinion, which her kinswoman, the Baroness Bernstein, who knew her perfectly well, entirely understood. The Baroness, too, was a woman of the world, and, possibly, on occasion, could be as selfish as any other person of fashion. She fully

understood the cause of the deference which all the Castlewood family showed to her—mother, and daughter, and sons,—and being a woman of great humour, played upon the dispositions of the various members of this family, amused herself with their greedinesses, their humiliations, their artless respect for her money-box, and clinging attachment to her purse. They were not very rich; Lady Castlewood's own money was settled on her children. The two elder had inherited nothing but flaxen heads from their German mother, and a pedigree of prodigious distinction. But those who had money, and those who had none, were alike eager for the Baroness's; in this matter the rich are surely quite as greedy as the poor.

So if Madam Bernstein struck her hand on the table, and caused the glasses and the persons round it to tremble at her wrath, it was because she was excited with plenty of punch and champagne, which her ladyship was in the habit of taking freely, and because she may have had a generous impulse when generous wine warmed her blood, and felt indignant as she thought of the poor lad yonder, sitting friendless and lonely on the outside of his ancestors' door; not because she was specially angry with her relatives, who she knew would act precisely as they had done.

The exhibition of their selfishness and humiliation alike amused her, as did Castlewood's act of revolt. He was as selfish as the rest of the family, but not so mean; and, as he candidly stated, he could afford the luxury of a little independence, having a tolerable estate to fall back upon.

Madam Bernstein was an early woman, restless, resolute, extraordinarily active for her age. She was up

long before the languid Castlewood ladies (just home from their London routs and balls) had quitted their feather-beds, or jolly Will had slept off his various potations of punch. She was up, and pacing the green terraces that sparkled with the sweet morning dew, which lay twinkling, also, on a flowery wilderness of trim parterres, and on the crisp walls of the dark box hedges, under which marble fauns and dryads were cooling themselves, whilst a thousand birds sang, the fountains plashed and glittered in the rosy morning sunshine, and the rooks cawed from the great wood.

Had the well-remembered scene (for she had visited it often in childhood) a freshness and charm for her? Did it recall days of innocence and happiness, and did its calm beauty soothe or please, or awaken remorse in her heart? Her manner was more than ordinarily affectionate and gentle, when, presently, after pacing the walks for a half-hour, the person for whom she was waiting came to her. This was our young Virginian, to whom she had despatched an early billet by one of the Lockwoods. The note was signed B. Bernstein, and informed Mr. Esmond Warrington that his relatives at Castlewood, and among them a dear friend of his grandfather, were most anxious that he should come to *"Colonel Esmond's house in England."* And now, accordingly, the lad made his appearance, passing under the old Gothic doorway, tripping down the steps from one garden terrace to another, hat in hand, his fair hair blowing from his flushed cheeks, his slim figure clad in mourning. The handsome and modest looks, the comely face and person, of the young lad pleased the lady. He made her a low bow which would have done credit to Versailles. She held out a little hand to him, and, as his own palm

closed over it, she laid the other hand softly on his ruffle. She looked very kindly and affectionately in the honest blushing face.

"I knew your grandfather very well, Harry," she said. "So you came yesterday to see his picture, and they turned you away, though you know the house was his of right?"

Harry blushed very red. "The servants did not know me. A young gentleman came to me last night," he said, "when I was peevish, and he, I fear, was tipsy. I spoke rudely to my cousin, and would ask his pardon. Your ladyship knows that in Virginia our manners towards strangers are different. I own I had expected another kind of welcome. Was it you, madam, who sent my cousin to me last night?"

"I sent him; but you will find your cousins most

friendly to you to-day. You must stay here. Lord Castlewood would have been with you this morning, only I was so eager to see you. There will be breakfast in an hour; and meantime you must talk to me. We will send to the 'Three Castles' for your servant and your baggage. Give me your arm. Stop, I dropped my cane when you came. *You* shall be my cane."

"My grandfather used to call us his crutches," said Harry.

"You are like him, though you are fair."

"You should have seen—you should have seen George," said the boy, and his honest eyes welled with tears. The recollection of his brother, the bitter pain of yesterday's humiliation, the affectionateness of the present greeting—all, perhaps, contributed to soften the lad's heart. He felt very tenderly and gratefully towards the lady who had received him so warmly. He was utterly alone and miserable a minute since, and here was a home and a kind hand held out to him. No wonder he clung to it. In the hour during which they talked together, the young fellow had poured out a great deal of his honest heart to the kind new-found friend; when the dial told breakfast-time he wondered to think how much he had told her. She took him to the breakfast-room; she presented him to his aunt, the Countess, and bade him embrace his cousins. Lord Castlewood was frank and gracious enough. Honest Will had a headache, but was utterly unconscious of the proceedings of the past night. The ladies were very pleasant and polite, as ladies of their fashion know how to be. How should Harry Warrington, a simple truth-telling lad from a distant colony, who had only yesterday put his foot upon English shore, know that my ladies, so smiling and easy in demeanour,

were furious against him, and aghast at the favour with which Madam Bernstein seemed to regard him?

She was *folle* of him, talked of no one else, scarce noticed the Castlewood young people, trotted with him over the house, and told him all its story, showed him the little room in the court-yard where his grandfather used to sleep, and a cunning cupboard over the fireplace which had been made in the time of the Catholic persecutions; drove out with him in the neighbouring country, and pointed out to him the most remarkable sites and houses, and had in return the whole of the young man's story.

This brief biography the kind reader will please to accept, not in the precise words in which Mr. Harry Warrington delivered it to Madam Bernstein, but in the form in which it has been cast in the Chapters next ensuing.

CHAPTER III

THE ESMONDS IN VIRGINIA

HENRY ESMOND, ESQ., an officer who had served with the rank of Colonel during the wars of Queen Anne's reign, found himself, at its close, compromised in certain attempts for the restoration of the Queen's family to the throne of these realms. Happily for itself, the nation preferred another dynasty; but some of the few opponents of the house of Hanover took refuge out of the three kingdoms, and amongst others, Colonel Esmond was counselled by his friends to go abroad. As Mr. Esmond sincerely regretted the part which he had taken, and as the august Prince who came to rule over England was the most peaceable of sovereigns, in a very little time the Colonel's friends found means to make his peace.

Mr. Esmond, it has been said, belonged to the noble

English family which takes its title from Castlewood, in the county of Hants; and it was pretty generally known that King James II. and his son had offered the title of Marquis to Colonel Esmond and his father, and that the former might have assumed the (Irish) peerage hereditary in his family, but for an informality which he did not choose to set right. Tired of the political struggles in which he had been engaged, and annoyed by family circumstances in Europe, he preferred to establish himself in Virginia, where he took possession of a large estate conferred by King Charles I. upon his ancestor. Here Mr. Esmond's daughter and grandsons were born, and his wife died. This lady, when she married him, was the widow of the Colonel's kinsman, the unlucky Viscount Castlewood, killed in a duel by Lord Mohun, at the close of King William's reign.

Mr. Esmond called his American house Castlewood, from the patrimonial home in the old country. The whole usages of Virginia, indeed, were fondly modelled after the English customs. It was a loyal colony. The Virginians boasted that King Charles II. had been king in Virginia before he had been king in England. English king and English church were alike faithfully honoured there. The resident gentry were allied to good English families. They held their heads above the Dutch traders of New York, and the money-getting Roundheads of Pennsylvania and New England. Never were people less republican than those of the great province which was soon to be foremost in the memorable revolt against the British Crown.

The gentry of Virginia dwelt on their great lands after a fashion almost patriarchal. For its rough cultivation, each estate had a multitude of hands—of pur-

chased and assigned servants—who were subject to the command of the master. The land yielded their food, live stock, and game. The great rivers swarmed with fish for the taking. From their banks the passage home was clear. Their ships took the tobacco off their private wharves on the banks of the Potomac or the James river, and carried it to London or Bristol,—bringing back English goods and articles of home manufacture in return for the only produce which the Virginian gentry chose to cultivate. Their hospitality was boundless. No stranger was ever sent away from their gates. The gentry received one another, and travelled to each other's houses, in a state almost feudal. The question of Slavery was not born at the time of which we write. To be the proprietor of black servants shocked the feelings of no Virginian gentleman; nor, in truth, was the despotism exercised over the negro race generally a savage one. The food was plenty; the poor black people lazy and not unhappy. You might have preached negro emancipation to Madam Esmond of Castlewood as you might have told her to let the horses run loose out of her stables; she had no doubt but that the whip and the corn-bag were good for both.

Her father may have thought otherwise, being of a sceptical turn on very many points, but his doubts did not break forth in active denial, and he was rather disaffected than rebellious. At one period, this gentleman had taken a part in active life at home, and possibly might have been eager to share its rewards; but in latter days he did not seem to care for them. A something had occurred in his life, which had cast a tinge of melancholy over all his existence. He was not unhappy—to those about him most kind—most affectionate, obsequious even

to the women of his family, whom he scarce ever contradicted; but there had been some bankruptcy of his heart, which his spirit never recovered. He submitted to life, rather then enjoyed it, and never was in better spirits than in his last hours when he was going to lay it down.

Having lost his wife, his daughter took the management of the Colonel and his affairs; and he gave them up to her charge with an entire acquiescence. So that he had his books and his quiet, he cared for no more. When company came to Castlewood, he entertained them handsomely, and was of a very pleasant, sarcastical turn. He was not in the least sorry when they went away.

"My love, I shall not be sorry to go myself," he said to his daughter, "and you, though the most affectionate of daughters, will console yourself after a while. Why should I, who am so old, be romantic? You may, who are still a young creature." This he said, not meaning all he said, for the lady whom he addressed was a matter-of-fact little person, with very little romance in her nature.

After fifteen years' residence upon his great Virginian estate, affairs prospered so well with the worthy proprietor, that he acquiesced in his daughter's plans for the building of a mansion much grander and more durable than the plain wooden edifice in which he had been content to live, so that his heirs might have a habitation worthy of their noble name. Several of Madam Warrington's neighbours had built handsome houses for themselves; perhaps it was her ambition to take rank in the country, which inspired this desire for improved quarters. Colonel Esmond, of Castlewood, neither cared for quarters nor for quarterings. But his daughter had a very high opinion of the merit and antiquity of her

lineage; and her sire, growing exquisitely calm and good-natured in his serene, declining years, humoured his child's peculiarities in an easy, bantering way,—nay, helped her with his antiquarian learning, which was not inconsiderable, and with his skill in the art of painting, of which he was a proficient. A knowledge of heraldry, a hundred years ago, formed part of the education of most noble ladies and gentlemen: during her visit to Europe, Miss Esmond had eagerly studied the family history and pedigrees, and returned thence to Virginia with a store of documents relative to her family on which she relied with implicit gravity and credence, and with the most edifying volumes then published in France and England, respecting the noble science. These works proved, to her perfect satisfaction, not only that the Esmonds were descended from noble Norman warriors, who came into England along with their victorious chief, but from native English of royal dignity: and two magnificent heraldic trees, cunningly painted by the hand of the Colonel, represented the family springing from the Emperor Charlemagne on the one hand, who was drawn in plate-armour, with his imperial mantle and diadem, and on the other from Queen Boadicea, whom the Colonel insisted upon painting in the light costume of an ancient British queen, with a prodigious gilded crown, a trifling mantle of furs, and a lovely symmetrical person, tastefully tattooed with figures of a brilliant blue tint. From these two illustrious stocks the family-tree rose until it united in the thirteenth century somewhere in the person of the fortunate Esmond, who claimed to spring from both.

Of the Warrington family, into which she married, good Madam Rachel thought but little. She wrote her-

self Esmond Warrington, but was universally called Madam Esmond of Castlewood, when, after her father's decease, she came to rule over that domain. It is even to be feared that quarrels for precedence in the colonial society occasionally disturbed her temper; for, though her father had had a marquis's patent from King James, which he had burned and disowned, she would frequently act as if that document existed and was in full force. She considered the English Esmonds of an inferior dignity to her own branch, and as for the colonial aristocracy, she made no scruple of asserting her superiority over the whole body of them. Hence quarrels and angry words, and even a scuffle or two, as we gather from her notes, at the Governor's assemblies at James Town. Wherefore recall the memory of these squabbles? Are not the persons who engaged in them beyond the reach of quarrels now, and has not the republic put an end to these social inequalities? Ere the establishment of Independence, there was no more aristocratic country in the world than Virginia; so the Virginians, whose history we have to narrate, were bred to have the fullest respect for the institutions of home, and the rightful king had not two more faithful little subjects than the young twins of Castlewood.

When the boys' grandfather died, their mother, in great state, proclaimed her eldest son George her successor and heir of the estate; and Harry, George's younger brother by half an hour, was always enjoined to respect his senior. All the household was equally instructed to pay him honour: the negroes, of whom there was a large and happy family, and the assigned servants from Europe, whose lot was made as bearable as it might be under the government of the lady of Castlewood. In

the whole family there scarcely was a rebel save Mrs. Esmond's faithful friend and companion, Madam Mountain, and Harry's foster-mother, a faithful negro woman, who never could be made to understand why her child should not be first, who was handsomer, and stronger, and cleverer than his brother, as she vowed; though, in truth, there was scarcely any difference in the beauty, strength, or stature of the twins. In disposition, they were in many points exceedingly unlike; but in feature they resembled each other so closely, that, but for the colour of their hair, it had been difficult to distinguish them. In their beds, and when their heads were covered with those vast ribboned nightcaps which our great and little ancestors wore, it was scarcely possible for any but a nurse or a mother to tell the one from the other child.

Howbeit, alike in form, we have said that they differed in temper. The elder was peaceful, studious, and silent; the younger was warlike and noisy. He was quick at learning when he began, but very slow at beginning. No threats of the ferule would provoke Harry to learn in an idle fit, or would prevent George from helping his brother in his lesson. Harry was of a strong military turn, drilled the little negroes on the estate, and caned them like a corporal, having many good boxing-matches with them, and never bearing malice if he was worsted;—whereas George was sparing of blows, and gentle with all about him. As the custom in all families was, each of the boys had a special little servant assigned him; and it was a known fact that George, finding his little wretch of a blackamoor asleep on his master's bed, sat down beside it and brushed the flies off the child with a feather-fan, to the horror of old Gumbo, the child's

father, who found his young master so engaged, and to the indignation of Madam Esmond, who ordered the young negro off to the proper officer for a whipping. In vain George implored and entreated—burst into passionate tears, and besought a remission of the sentence. His mother was inflexible regarding the young rebel's punishment, and the little negro went off beseeching his young master not to cry.

A fierce quarrel between mother and son ensued out of this event. Her son would not be pacified. He said the punishment was a shame—a shame; that he was the master of the boy, and no one—no, not his mother—had a right to touch him; that she might order *him* to be corrected, and that he would suffer the punishment, as he and Harry often had, but no one should lay a hand on his boy. Trembling with passionate rebellion against what he conceived the injustice of the procedure, he vowed—actually shrieking out an oath, which shocked his fond mother and governor, who never before heard such language from the usually gentle child—that on the day he came of age he would set young Gumbo free—went to visit the child in the slaves' quarters, and gave him one of his own toys.

The young black martyr was an impudent, lazy, saucy little personage, who would be none the worse for a whipping, as the Colonel no doubt thought; for he acquiesced in the child's punishment when Madam Esmond insisted upon it, and only laughed in his good-natured way when his indignant grandson called out—

"You let mamma rule you in everything, grandpapa."

"Why, so I do," says grandpapa. "Rachel, my love, the way in which I am petticoat-ridden is so evident that even this baby has found it out."

"Then why don't you stand up like a man?" says little Harry, who always was ready to abet his brother.

Grandpapa looked queerly.

"Because I like sitting down best, my dear," he said. "I am an old gentleman, and standing fatigues me."

On account of a certain apish drollery and humour which exhibited itself in the lad, and a liking for some of the old man's pursuits, the first of the twins was the grandfather's favourite and companion, and would laugh and talk out all his infantine heart to the old gentleman, to whom the younger had seldom a word to say. George was a demure studious boy, and his senses seemed to brighten up in the library, where his brother was so gloomy. He knew the books before he could well-nigh carry them, and read in them long before he could understand them. Harry, on the other hand, was all alive in the stables or in the wood, eager for all parties of hunting and fishing, and promised to be a good sportsman from a very early age. Their grandfather's ship was sailing for Europe once when the boys were children, and they were asked, what present Captain Franks should bring them back? George was divided between books and a fiddle; Harry instantly declared for a little gun: and Madam Warrington (as she then was called) was hurt that her elder boy should have low tastes, and applauded the younger's choice as more worthy of his name and lineage. "Books, papa, I can fancy to be a good choice," she replied to her father, who tried to convince her that George had a right to his opinion, "though I am sure you must have pretty nigh all the books in the world already. But I never can desire—I may be wrong, but I never can desire—that my son, and the

grandson of the Marquis of Esmond, should be a fiddler."

"Should be a fiddlestick, my dear," the old Colonel answered. "Remember that Heaven's ways are not ours, and that each creature born has a little kingdom of thought of his own, which it is a sin in us to invade. Suppose George loves music? You can no more stop him than you can order a rose not to smell sweet, or a bird not to sing."

"A bird! A bird sings from nature; George did not come into the world with a fiddle in his hand," says Mrs. Warrington, with a toss of her head. "I am sure I hated the harpsichord when a chit at Kensington School, and only learned it to please my mamma. Say what you will, dear sir, I can *not* believe that this fiddling is work for persons of fashion."

"And King David who played the harp, my dear?"

"I wish my papa would read him more, and not speak about him in that way," said Mrs. Warrington.

"Nay, my dear, it was but by way of illustration," the father replied gently. It was Colonel Esmond's nature, as he has owned in his own biography, always to be led by a woman; and, his wife dead, he coaxed and dandled and spoiled his daughter; laughing at her caprices, but humouring them; making a joke of her prejudices, but letting them have their way; indulging, and perhaps increasing, her natural imperiousness of character, though it was his maxim that we can't change dispositions by meddling, and only make hypocrites of our children by commanding them over-much.

At length the time came when Mr. Esmond was to have done with the affairs of this life, and he laid them down as if glad to be rid of their burden. We must

not ring in an opening history with tolling bells, or preface it with a funeral sermon. All who read and heard that discourse, wondered where Parson Broadbent of James Town found the eloquence and the Latin which adorned it. Perhaps Mr. Dempster knew, the boys' Scotch tutor, who corrected the proofs of the oration, which was printed, by desire of his Excellency and many persons of honour, at Mr. Franklin's press in Philadelphia. No such sumptuous funeral had ever been seen in the country as that which Madam Esmond Warrington ordained for her father, who would have been the first to smile at that pompous grief. The little lads of Castlewood, almost smothered in black trains and hatbands, headed the procession, and were followed by my Lord Fairfax, from Greenway Court, by his Excellency the Governor of Virginia (with his coach), by the Randolphs, the Careys, the Harrisons, the Washingtons, and many others, for the whole county esteemed the departed gentleman, whose goodness, whose high talents, whose benevolence and unobtrusive urbanity had earned for him the just respect of his neighbours. When informed of the event, the family of Colonel Esmond's stepson, the Lord Castlewood of Hampshire in England, asked to be at the charges of the marble slab which recorded the names and virtues of his lordship's mother and her husband; and after due time of preparation, the monument was set up, exhibiting the arms and coronet of the Esmonds, supported by a little chubby group of weeping cherubs, and reciting an epitaph which for once did not tell any falsehoods.

CHAPTER IV

IN WHICH HARRY FINDS A NEW RELATIVE

KIND friends, neighbours hospitable, cordial, even respectful,—an ancient name, a large estate, and a sufficient fortune, a comfortable home, supplied with all the necessaries and many of the luxuries of life, and a troop of servants, black and white, eager to do your bidding; good health, affectionate children, and, let us humbly add, a good cook, cellar, and library—ought not a person in the possession of all these benefits to be considered very decently happy? Madam Esmond Warrington possessed all these causes for happiness; she reminded herself of them daily in her morning and evening prayers. She was scrupulous in her devotions, good to the poor, never knowingly did anybody a wrong. Yonder I fancy her enthroned in her principality of Castlewood, the country

gentlefolks paying her court, the sons dutiful to her, the domestics tumbling over each other's black heels to do her bidding, the poor whites grateful for her bounty and implicitly taking her doses when they were ill, the smaller gentry always acquiescing in her remarks, and for ever letting her win at backgammon—well, with all these benefits, which are more sure than fate allots to most mortals, I don't think the little Princess Pocahontas, as she was called, was to be envied in the midst of her dominions. The Princess's husband, who was cut off in early life, was as well perhaps out of the way. Had he survived his marriage by many years, they would have quarrelled fiercely, or he would infallibly have been a henpecked husband, of which sort there were a few specimens still extant a hundred years ago. The truth is, little Madam Esmond never came near man or woman, but she tried to domineer over them. If people obeyed, she was their very good friend; if they resisted, she fought and fought until she or they gave in. We are all miserable sinners: that's a fact we acknowledge in public every Sunday—no one announced it in a more clear resolute voice than the little lady. As a mortal, she may have been in the wrong, of course; only she very seldom acknowledged the circumstance to herself, and to others never. Her father, in his old age, used to watch her freaks of despotism, haughtiness, and stubbornness, and amuse himself with them. She felt that his eye was upon her; his humour, of which quality she possessed little herself, subdued and bewildered her. But, the Colonel gone, there was nobody else whom she was disposed to obey,—and so I am rather glad for my part that I did not live a hundred years ago at Castlewood in Westmorland County in Virginia. I fancy, one

would not have been too happy there. Happy, who is happy? Was not there a serpent in Paradise itself, and if Eve had been perfectly happy beforehand, would she have listened to him?

The management of the house of Castlewood had been in the hands of the active little lady long before the Colonel slept the sleep of the just. She now exercised a rigid supervision over the estate; dismissed Colonel Esmond's English factor and employed a new one; built, improved, planted, grew tobacco, appointed a new overseer, and imported a new tutor. Much as she loved her father, there were some of his maxims by which she was not inclined to abide. Had she not obeyed her papa and mamma during all their lives, as a dutiful daughter should? So ought all children to obey their parents, that their days might be long in the land. The little Queen domineered over her little dominion, and the Princes her sons were only her first subjects. Ere long she discontinued her husband's name of Warrington, and went by the name of Madam Esmond in the country. Her family pretensions were known there. She had no objection to talk of the Marquis's title which King James had given to her father and grandfather. Her papa's enormous magnanimity might induce him to give up his titles and rank to the younger branch of the family, and to her half-brother, my Lord Castlewood and his children; but she and her sons were of the elder branch of the Esmonds, and she expected that they should be treated accordingly. Lord Fairfax was the only gentleman in the colony of Virginia to whom she would allow precedence over her. She insisted on the *pas* before all Lieutenant-Governors' and Judges' ladies; before the wife of the Governor of a colony she

would, of course, yield as to the representative of the Sovereign. Accounts are extant, in the family papers and letters, of one or two tremendous battles which Madam fought with the wives of colonial dignitaries upon these questions of etiquette. As for her husband's family of Warrington, they were as naught in her eyes. She married an English baronet's younger son out of Norfolk to please her parents, whom she was always bound to obey. At the early age at which she married—a chit out of a boarding-school—she would have jumped overboard if her papa had ordered. "And that is always the way with the Esmonds," she said.

The English Warringtons were not over-much flattered by the little American Princess's behaviour to them, and her manner of speaking about them. Once a year a solemn letter used to be addressed to the Warrington family, and to her noble kinsmen the Hampshire Esmonds; but a Judge's lady with whom Madam Esmond had quarrelled, returning to England out of Virginia, chanced to meet Lady Warrington, who was in London with Sir Miles attending Parliament, and this person repeated some of the speeches which the Princess Pocahontas was in the habit of making regarding her own and her husband's English relatives, and my Lady Warrington, I suppose, carried the story to my Lady Castlewood; after which the letters from Virginia were not answered, to the surprise and wrath of Madam Esmond, who speedily left off writing also.

So this good woman fell out with her neighbours, with her relatives, and, as it must be owned, with her sons also.

A very early difference which occurred between the Queen and Crown Prince arose out of the dismissal of

Mr. Dempster, the lad's tutor and the late Colonel's secretary. In her father's life Madam Esmond bore him with difficulty, or it should be rather said Mr. Dempster could scarce put up with her. She was jealous of books somehow, and thought your book-worms dangerous folks, insinuating bad principles. She had heard that Dempster was a Jesuit in disguise, and the poor fellow was obliged to go build himself a cabin in a clearing, and teach school and practise medicine where he could find customers among the sparse inhabitants of the province. Master George vowed he never would forsake his old tutor, and kept his promise. Harry had always loved fishing and sporting better than books, and he and the poor Dominie had never been on terms of close intimacy. Another cause of dispute presently ensued.

By the death of an aunt, and at his father's demise, the heirs of Mr. George Warrington became entitled to a sum of six thousand pounds, of which their mother was one of the trustees. She never could be made to understand that she was not the proprietor, and not merely the trustee of this money; and was furious with the London lawyer, the other trustee, who refused to send it over at her order. "Is not all I have my sons'?" she cried, "and would I not cut myself into little pieces to serve them? With the six thousand pounds I would have bought Mr. Boulter's estate and negroes, which would have given us a good thousand pounds a year, and made a handsome provision for my Harry." Her young friend and neighbour, Mr. Washington of Mount Vernon, could not convince her that the London agent was right, and must not give up his trust except to those for whom he held it. Madam Esmond gave the London lawyer a piece of her mind, and, I am sorry to say, in-

formed Mr. Draper that he was an insolent pettifogger, and deserved to be punished for doubting the honour of a mother and an Esmond. It must be owned that the Virginian Princess had a temper of her own.

George Esmond, her first-born, when this little matter was referred to him, and his mother vehemently insisted that he should declare himself, was of the opinion of Mr. Washington and Mr. Draper, the London lawyer. The boy said he could not help himself. *He* did not want the money: he would be very glad to think otherwise, and to give the money to his mother, if he had the power. But Madam Esmond would not hear any of these reasons. Feelings were her reasons. Here was a chance of making Harry's fortune—dear Harry, who was left with such a slender younger brother's pittance—and the wretches in London would not help him; his own brother, who inherited all her papa's estate, would not help him. To think of a child of hers being so mean at *fourteen years of age!* &c. &c. Add tears, scorn, frequent innuendo, long estrangement, bitter outbreak, passionate appeals to heaven and the like, and we may fancy the widow's state of mind. Are there not beloved beings of the gentler sex who argue in the same way now-a-days? The book of female logic is blotted all over with tears, and Justice in their courts is for ever in a passion.

This occurrence set the widow resolutely saving for her younger son, for whom, as in duty bound, she was eager to make a portion. The fine buildings were stopped which the Colonel had commenced at Castlewood, who had freighted ships from New York with Dutch bricks, and imported, at great charges, mantelpieces, carved cornice-work, sashes and glass, carpets and

costly upholstery from home. No more books were bought. The agent had orders to discontinue sending wine. Madam Esmond deeply regretted the expense of a fine carriage which she had had from England, and only rode in it to church groaning in spirit, and crying to the sons opposite her, "Harry, Harry! I wish I had put by the money for thee, my poor portionless child—three hundred and eighty guineas of ready money to Messieurs Hatchett!"

"You will give me plenty while you live, and George will give me plenty when you die," says Harry, gaily.

"Not unless he changes in *spirit,* my dear," says the lady, with a grim glance at her elder boy. "Not unless heaven softens his heart and teaches him *charity,* for which I pray day and night; as Mountain knows; do you not, Mountain?"

Mrs. Mountain, Ensign Mountain's widow, Madam Esmond's companion and manager, who took the fourth seat in the family coach on these Sundays, said, "Humph! I know you are always disturbing yourself and crying out about this legacy, and I don't see that there is any need."

"Oh, no! no need!" cries the widow, rustling in her silks; "of course I have no need to be disturbed, because my eldest born is *a disobedient son* and an *unkind brother*—because he has an estate, and my poor Harry, bless him, but *a mess of pottage.*"

George looked despairingly at his mother until he could see her no more for eyes welled up with tears. "I wish you would bless me, too, O my mother!" he said, and burst into a passionate fit of weeping. Harry's arms were in a moment round his brother's neck, and he kissed George a score of times.

"Never mind, George. *I* know whether you are a good brother or not. Don't mind what she says. She don't mean it."

"I *do* mean it, child," cries the mother. "Would to heaven—"

"HOLD YOUR TONGUE, I SAY!" roars out Harry. "It's a shame to speak so to him, ma'am."

"And so it is, Harry," says Mrs. Mountain, shaking his hand. "You never said a truer word in your life."

"Mrs. Mountain, do you dare to set my children against me?" cries the widow. "From this very day, madam—"

"Turn me and my child into the street? Do," says Mrs. Mountain. "That will be a fine revenge because the English lawyer won't give you the boy's money. Find another companion who will tell you black is white, and flatter you: it is not my way, madam. When shall I go? I shan't be long a-packing. I did not bring much into Castlewood House, and I shall not take much out."

"Hush! the bells are ringing for church, Mountain. Let us try, if you please, and compose ourselves," said the widow, and she looked with eyes of extreme affection, certainly at one—perhaps at both—of her children. George kept his head down, and Harry, who was near, got quite close to him during the sermon, and sat with his arm round his brother's neck.

Harry had proceeded in his narrative after his own fashion, interspersing it with many youthful ejaculations, and answering a number of incidental questions asked by his listener. The old lady seemed never tired of hearing him. Her amiable hostess and her daughters came more than once, to ask if she would ride, or walk,

or take a dish of tea, or play a game at cards; but all these amusements Madame Bernstein declined, saying that she found infinite amusement in Harry's conversation. Especially when any of the Castlewood family were present, she redoubled her caresses, insisted upon the lad speaking close to her ear, and would call out to the others, "Hush, my dears! I can't hear our cousin speak." And they would quit the room, striving still to look pleased.

"Are you my cousin too?" asked the honest boy. "You seem kinder than my other cousins."

Their talk took place in the wainscoted parlour, where the family had taken their meals in ordinary for at least two centuries past, and which, as we have said, was hung with portraits of the race. Over Madame Bernstein's great chair was a Kneller, one of the most brilliant pictures of the gallery, representing a young lady of three or four and twenty, in the easy flowing dress and loose robes of Queen Anne's time—a hand on a cushion near her, a quantity of auburn hair parted off a fair forehead, and flowing over pearly shoulders and a lovely neck. Under this sprightly picture the lady sat with her knitting-needles.

When Harry asked, "Are you my cousin, too?" she said, "That picture is by Sir Godfrey, who thought himself the greatest painter in the world. But he was not so good as Lely, who painted your grandmother—my—my Lady Castlewood, Colonel Esmond's wife; nor he so good as Sir Anthony Van Dyck, who painted your great-grandfather, yonder—and who looks, Harry, a much finer gentleman than he was. Some of us are painted blacker than we are. Did you recognise your grandmother in that picture? She had the

loveliest fair hair and shape of any woman of her time."

"I fancied I knew the portrait from instinct, perhaps, and a certain likeness to my mother."

"Did Mrs. Warrington—I beg her pardon, I think she calls herself Madam or my Lady Esmond now . . . ?"

"They call my mother so in our province," said the boy.

"Did she never tell you of another daughter her mother had in England, before she married your grandfather?"

"She never spoke of one."

"Nor your grandfather?"

"Never. But in his picture-books, which he constantly made for us children, he used to draw a head very like that above your ladyship. That, and Viscount Francis, and King James III., he drew a score of times, I am sure."

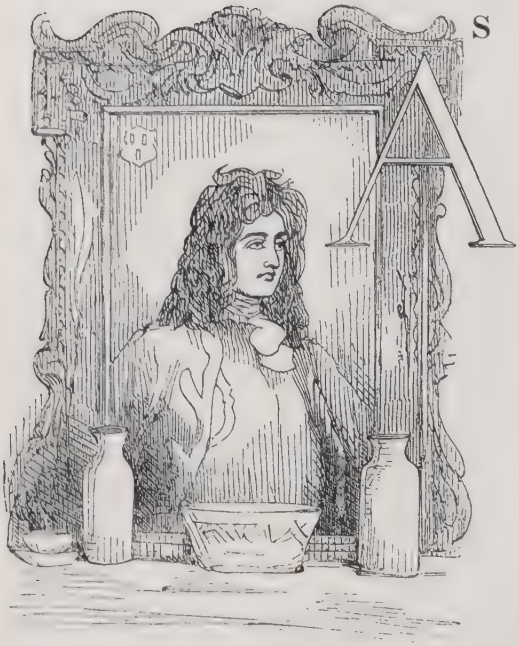
"And the picture over me reminds you of no one, Harry?"

"No, indeed."

"Ah! Here is a sermon!" says the lady, with a sigh. "Harry, that was my face once—yes, it was—and then I was called Beatrix Esmond. And your mother is my half-sister, child, and she has never even mentioned my name!"

CHAPTER V

FAMILY JARS



AS Harry Warrington related to his new-found relative the simple story of his adventures at home, no doubt Madam Bernstein, who possessed a great sense of humour and a remarkable knowledge of the world, formed her judgment respecting the persons and events described; and if her opinion was not in all respects favourable, what can be said but that men and women are imperfect, and human life not entirely pleasant or profitable? The court and city-bred lady recoiled at the mere thought of her American sister's countryfied existence. Such a life would be rather wearisome to most city-bred ladies. But little Madam Warrington knew no better, and was satisfied with her life, as indeed she was with herself in general. Because you and I are epicures or dainty feeders,

it does not follow that Hodge is miserable with his homely meal of bread and bacon. Madam Warrington had a life of duties and employments which might be hum-drum, but at any rate were pleasant to her. She was a brisk little woman of business, and all the affairs of her large estate came under her cognizance. No pie was baked at Castlewood but her little finger was in it. She set the maids to their spinning, she saw the kitchen wenches at their work, she trotted a-field on her pony, and oversaw the overseers and the negro hands as they worked in the tobacco and corn fields. If a slave was ill, she would go to his quarters in any weather, and doctor him with great resolution. She had a book full of receipts after the old fashion, and a closet where she distilled waters and compounded elixirs, and a medicine-chest which was the terror of her neighbours. They trembled to be ill, lest the little lady should be upon them with her decoctions and her pills.

A hundred years back there were scarce any towns in Virginia; the establishments of the gentry were little villages in which they and their vassals dwelt. Rachel Esmond ruled like a little queen in Castlewood; the princes, her neighbours, governed their estates round-about. Many of these were rather needy potentates, living plentifully but in the roughest fashion, having numerous domestics whose liveries were often ragged; keeping open houses, and turning away no stranger from their gates; proud, idle, fond of all sorts of field-sports as became gentlemen of good lineage. The widow of Castlewood was as hospitable as her neighbours, and a better economist than most of them. More than one, no doubt, would have had no objection to share her life-interest in the estate, and supply the place of papa to

her boys. But where was the man good enough for a person of her ladyship's exalted birth? There was a talk of making the Duke of Cumberland viceroy, or even king, over America. Madam Warrington's gossips laughed, and said she was waiting for him. She remarked, with much gravity and dignity, that persons of as high birth as his Royal Highness had made offers of alliance to the Esmond family.

She had, as lieutenant under her, an officer's widow who has been before named, and who had been Madam Esmond's companion at school, as her late husband had been the regimental friend of the late Mr. Warrington. When the English girls at the Kensington Academy, where Rachel Esmond had her education, teased and tortured the little American stranger, and laughed at the principled airs which she gave herself from a very early age, Fanny Parker defended and befriended her. They both married ensigns in Kingsley's. They became tenderly attached to each other. It was "my Fanny" and "my Rachel" in the letters of the young ladies. Then, my Fanny's husband died in sad out-at-elbowed circumstances, leaving no provision for his widow and her infant; and, in one of his annual voyages, Captain Franks brought over Mrs. Mountain, in the "Young Rachel," to Virginia.

There was plenty of room in Castlewood House, and Mrs. Mountain served to enliven the place. She played cards with the mistress: she had some knowledge of music, and could help the eldest boy in that way: she laughed and was pleased with the guests: she saw to the strangers' chambers, and presided over the presses and the linen. She was a kind, brisk, jolly-looking widow, and more than one unmarried gentleman of the

colony asked her to change her name for his own. But she chose to keep that of Mountain, though, and perhaps because, it had brought her no good fortune. One marriage was enough for her, she said. Mr. Mountain had amiably spent her little fortune and his own. Her last trinkets went to pay his funeral; and, as long as Madam Warrington would keep her at Castlewood, she preferred a home without a husband to any which as yet had been offered to her in Virginia. The two ladies quarrelled plentifully; but they loved each other: they made up their differences: they fell out again, to be reconciled presently. When either of the boys was ill, each lady vied with the other in maternal tenderness and care. In his last days and illness, Mrs. Mountain's cheerfulness and kindness had been greatly appreciated by the Colonel, whose memory Madam Warrington regarded more than that of any living person. So that, year after year, when Captain Franks would ask Mrs. Mountain, in his pleasant way, whether she was going back with him that voyage? she would decline, and say that she proposed to stay a year more.

And when suitors came to Madam Warrington, as come they would, she would receive their compliments and attentions kindly enough, and asked more than one of these lovers whether it was Mrs. Mountain he came after? She would use her best offices with Mountain. Fanny was the best creature, was of a good English family, and would make any gentleman happy. Did the Squire declare it was to her and not her dependant that he paid his addresses; she would make him her gravest curtsey, say that she really had been utterly mistaken as to his views, and let him know that the daughter of the Marquis of Esmond lived for her people

and her sons, and did not propose to change her condition. Have we not read how Queen Elizabeth was a perfectly sensible woman of business, and was pleased to inspire not only terror and awe, but love in the bosoms of her subjects? So the little Virginian princess had her favourites, and accepted their flatteries, and grew tired of them, and was cruel or kind to them as suited her wayward imperial humour. There was no amount of compliment which she would not graciously receive and take as her due. Her little foible was so well known that the wags used to practise upon it. Rattling Jack Firebrace of Henrico county had free quarters for months at Castlewood, and was a prime favourite with the lady there, because he addressed verses to her which he stole out of the pocket-books. Tom Humbold of Spotsylvania wagered fifty hogsheads against five that he would make her institute an order of knighthood, and won his wager.

The elder boy saw these freaks and oddities of his good mother's disposition, and chafed and raged at them privately. From very early days he revolted when flatteries and compliments were paid to the little lady, and strove to expose them with his juvenile satire; so that his mother would say gravely, "The Esmonds were always of a jealous disposition, and my poor boy takes after my father and mother in this." George hated Jack Firebrace and Tom Humbold, and all their like; whereas Harry went out sporting with them, and fowling, and fishing, and cock-fighting, and enjoyed all the fun of the country.

One winter, after their first tutor had been dismissed, Madam Esmond took them to Williamsburg, for such education as the schools and college there afforded, and

The Family Pew

there it was the fortune of the family to listen to the preaching of the famous Mr. Whitfield, who had come into Virginia, where the habits and preaching of the established clergy were not very edifying. Unlike many of the neighbouring provinces, Virginia was a Church of England colony: the clergymen were paid by the State and had glebes allotted to them; and, there being no Church of England bishop as yet in America, the colonists were obliged to import their divines from the mother-country. Such as came were not, naturally, of the very best or most eloquent kind of pastors. Noblemen's hangers-on, insolvent parsons who had quarrelled with justice or the bailiff, brought their stained cassocks into the colony in the hopes of finding a living there. No wonder that Whitfield's great voice stirred those whom harmless Mr. Broadbent, the Williamsburg chaplain, never could awaken. At first the boys were as much excited as their mother by Mr. Whitfield: they sang hymns, and listened to him with fervour, and, could he have remained long enough among them, Harry and George had both worn black coats probably instead of epaulettes. The simple boys communicated their experiences to one another, and were on the daily and nightly look out for the sacred "call," in the hope or the possession of which such a vast multitude of Protestant England was thrilling at the time.

But Mr. Whitfield could not stay always with the little congregation of Williamsburg. His mission was to enlighten the whole benighted people of the Church, and from the East to the West to trumpet the truth and bid slumbering sinners awaken. However, he comforted the widow with precious letters, and promised to send her a tutor for her sons who should be capable of

teaching them not only profane learning, but of strengthening and confirming them in science much more precious.

In due course, a chosen vessel arrived from England. Young Mr. Ward had a voice as loud as Mr. Whitfield's, and could talk almost as readily and for as long a time. Night and evening the hall sounded with his exhortations. The domestic negroes crept to the doors to listen to him. Other servants darkened the porch windows with their crisp heads to hear him discourse. It was over the black sheep of the Castlewood flock that Mr. Ward somehow had the most influence. These woolly lamblings were immensely affected by his exhortations, and, when he gave out the hymn, there was such a negro chorus about the house as might be heard across the Potomac—such a chorus as would never have been heard in the Colonel's time—for that worthy gentleman had a suspicion of all cassocks, and said he would never have any controversy with a clergyman but upon backgammon. Where money was wanted for charitable purposes no man was more ready, and the good, easy Virginian clergyman, who loved backgammon heartily, too, said that the worthy Colonel's charity must cover his other shortcomings.

Ward was a handsome young man. His preaching pleased Madam Esmond from the first, and, I dare say, satisfied her as much as Mr. Whitfield's. Of course it cannot be the case at the present day when they are so finely educated, but women, a hundred years ago, were credulous, eager to admire and believe, and apt to imagine all sorts of excellences in the object of their admiration. For weeks, nay, months, Madam Esmond was never tired of hearing Mr. Ward's great glib voice

and voluble common-places: and, according to her wont, she insisted that her neighbours should come and listen to him, and ordered them to be converted. Her young favourite, Mr. Washington, she was especially anxious to influence; and again and again pressed him to come and stay at Castlewood and benefit by the spiritual advantages there to be obtained. But that young gentleman found he had particular business which called him home or away from home, and always ordered his horse of evenings when the time was coming for Mr. Ward's exercises. And—what boys are just towards their pedagogue?—the twins grew speedily tired and even rebellious under their new teacher.

They found him a bad scholar, a dull fellow, and ill bred to boot. George knew much more Latin and Greek than his master, and caught him in perpetual blunders and false quantities. Harry, who could take much greater liberties than were allowed to his elder brother, mimicked Ward's manner of eating and talking, so that Mrs. Mountain and even Madam Esmond were forced to laugh, and little Fanny Mountain would crow with delight. Madam Esmond would have found the fellow out for a vulgar quack but for her son's opposition, which she, on her part, opposed with her own indomitable will. "What matters whether he has more or less of profane learning?" she asked; "in that which is most precious, Mr. W. is able to be a teacher to all of us. What if his manners are a little rough? Heaven does not choose its elect from among the great and wealthy. I wish you knew *one* book, children, as well as Mr. Ward does. It is your wicked pride—the pride of all the Esmonds—which prevents you from listening to him. Go down on your knees in your chamber and pray to be

corrected of that dreadful fault." Ward's discourse that evening was about Naaman the Syrian, and the pride he had in his native rivers of Abana and Pharpar, which he vainly imagined to be superior to the healing waters of Jordan—the moral being, that he, Ward, was the keeper and guardian of the undoubted waters of Jordan, and that the unhappy, conceited boys must go to perdition unless they came to him.

George now began to give way to a wicked sarcastic method, which, perhaps, he had inherited from his grandfather, and with which, when a quiet, skilful young person chooses to employ it, he can make a whole family uncomfortable. He took up Ward's pompous remarks and made jokes of them, so that that young divine chafed and almost choked over his great meals. He made Madam Esmond angry, and doubly so when he sent off Harry into fits of laughter. Her authority was defied, her officer scorned and insulted, her youngest child perverted, by the obstinate elder brother. She made a desperate and unhappy attempt to maintain her power.

The boys were fourteen years of age, Harry being taller and much more advanced than his brother, who was delicate, and as yet almost child-like in stature and appearance. The *baculine* method was a quite common mode of argument in those days. Serjeants, schoolmasters, slave-overseers, used the cane freely. Our little boys had been horsed many a day by Mr. Dempster, their Scotch tutor, in their grandfather's time; and Harry, especially, had got to be quite accustomed to the practice, and made very light of it. But, in the interregnum after Colonel Esmond's death, the cane had been laid aside, and the young gentlemen at Castlewood had been allowed to have their own way. Her own and

her lieutenant's authority being now spurned by the youthful rebels, the unfortunate mother thought of restoring it by means of coercion. She took counsel of Mr. Ward. That athletic young pedagogue could easily find chapter and verse to warrant the course which he wished to pursue,—in fact, there was no doubt about the wholesomeness of the practice in those days. He had begun by flattering the boys, finding a good berth and snug quarters at Castlewood, and hoping to remain there. But they laughed at his flattery, they scorned his bad manners, they yawned soon at his sermons; the more their mother favoured him, the more they disliked him; and so the tutor and the pupils cordially hated each other. Mrs. Mountain, who was the boys' friend, especially George's friend, whom she thought unjustly treated by his mother, warned the lads to be prudent, and that some conspiracy was hatching against them. "Ward is more obsequious than ever to your mamma. It turns my stomach, it does, to hear him flatter, and to see him gobble—the odious wretch! You must be on your guard, my poor boys—you must learn your lessons, and not anger your tutor. A mischief will come, I know it will. Your mamma was talking about you to Mr. Washington the other day, when I came into the room. I don't like that Major Washington, you know I don't. Don't say—O Mounty! Master Harry. You always stand up for your friends, you do. The Major is very handsome and tall, and he may be very good, but he is much too *old* a young man for me. Bless you, my dears, the quantity of wild oats your father sowed and my own poor Mountain when they were Ensigns in Kingsley's, would fill sacks full! Show me Mr. Washington's wild oats, I say—not a grain! Well, I happened to step in

last Tuesday, when he was here with your mamma; and I am sure they were talking about you, for he said, "Discipline is discipline, and must be preserved. There can be but one command in a house, ma'am, and you must be the mistress of yours."

"The very words he used to me," cries Harry. "He told me that he did not like to meddle with other folks' affairs, but that our mother was very angry, dangerously angry, he said, and he begged me to obey Mr. Ward, and specially to press George to do so."

"Let him manage his own house, not mine," says George, very haughtily. And the caution, far from benefiting him, only rendered the lad more supercilious and refractory.

On the next day the storm broke, and vengeance fell on the little rebel's head. Words passed between George and Mr. Ward during the morning study. The boy was quite insubordinate and unjust: even his faithful brother cried out, and owned that he was in the wrong. Mr. Ward kept his temper—to compress, bottle up, cork down, and prevent your anger from present furious explosion, is called keeping your temper—and said he should speak upon this business to Madam Esmond. When the family met at dinner, Mr. Ward requested her ladyship to stay, and, temperately enough, laid the subject of dispute before her.

He asked Master Harry to confirm what he had said: and poor Harry was obliged to admit all the Dominie's statements.

George, standing under his grandfather's portrait by the chimney, said haughtily that what Mr. Ward had said was perfectly correct.

"To be a tutor to such a pupil is absurd," said Mr.

Ward, making a long speech, interspersed with many of his usual Scripture phrases, at each of which, as they occurred, that wicked young George smiled, and pished scornfully, and at length Ward ended by asking her honour's leave to retire.

"Not before you have punished this wicked and disobedient child," said Madam Esmond, who had been gathering anger during Ward's harangue, and especially at her son's behaviour.

"Punish!" says George.

"Yes, sir, punish! If means of love and entreaty fail, as they have with your proud heart, other means must be found to bring you to obedience. I punish you now, rebellious boy, to guard you from greater punishment hereafter. The discipline of this family must be maintained. There can be but one command in a house, and I must be the mistress of mine. You will punish this refractory boy, Mr. Ward, as we have agreed that you should do, and if there is the least resistance on his part, my overseer and servants will lend you aid."

In some such words the widow no doubt must have spoken, but with many vehement Scriptural allusions, which it does not become this chronicler to copy. To be for ever applying to the Sacred Oracles, and accommodating their sentences to your purpose—to be for ever taking heaven into your confidence about your private affairs, and passionately calling for its interference in your family quarrels and difficulties—to be so familiar with its designs and schemes as to be able to threaten your neighbour with its thunders, and to know precisely its intentions regarding him and others who differ from your infallible opinion—this was the schooling which our simple widow had received from her impetuous young

spiritual guide, and I doubt whether it brought her much comfort.

In the midst of his mother's harangue, in spite of it perhaps, George Esmond felt he had been wrong. "There can be but one command in the house, and you must be mistress—I know who said those words before you," George said, slowly, and looking very white—"and—and I know, mother, that I have acted wrongly to Mr. Ward."

"He owns it! He asks pardon!" cries Harry. "That's right, George! That's enough: isn't it?"

"No, it is *not* enough!" cried the little woman. "The disobedient boy must pay the penalty of his disobedience. When I was headstrong, as I sometimes was as a child before my spirit was changed and humbled, my mamma punished me, and I submitted. So must George. I desire you will do your duty, Mr. Ward."

"Stop, mother!—you don't quite know what you are doing," George said, exceedingly agitated.

"I know that he who spares the rod spoils the child, ungrateful boy!" says Madam Esmond, with more references of the same nature, which George heard, looking very pale and desperate.

Upon the mantelpiece, under the Colonel's portrait, stood a china-cup, by which the widow set great store, as her father had always been accustomed to drink from it. George suddenly took it, and a strange smile passed over his pale face.

"Stay one minute. Don't go away yet," he cried to his mother, who was leaving the room. "You—you are very fond of this cup, mother?"—and Harry looked at him, wondering. "If I broke it, it could never be mended, could it? All the tinkers' rivets would not make

it a whole cup again. My dear old grandpapa's cup! I have been wrong. Mr. Ward, I ask pardon. I will try and amend."

The widow looked at her son indignantly, almost scornfully. "I thought," she said, "I thought an Esmond had been more of a man than to be afraid, and"—here she gave a little scream as Harry uttered an exclamation, and dashed forward with his hands stretched out towards his brother.

George, after looking at the cup, raised it, opened his hand, and let it fall on the marble slab below him. Harry had tried in vain to catch it.

"It is too late, Hal," George said. "You will never mend that again—never. Now, mother, I am ready, as it is your wish. Will you come and see whether I am afraid? Mr. Ward, I am your servant. Your servant? Your slave! And the next time I meet Mr. Washington, Madam, I will thank him for the advice which he gave you."

"I say, do your duty, sir!" cried Mrs. Esmond, stamping her little foot. And George, making a low bow to Mr. Ward, begged him to go first out of the room to the study.

"Stop! For God's sake, mother, stop!" cried poor Hal. But passion was boiling in the little woman's heart, and she would not hear the boy's petition. "You only abet him, sir!" she cried. "If I had to do it myself, it should be done!" And Harry, with sadness and wrath in his countenance, left the room by the door through which Mr. Ward and his brother had just issued.

The widow sank down on a great chair near it, and sat awhile vacantly looking at the fragments of the broken cup. Then she inclined her head towards the

door—one of half-a-dozen of carved mahogany which the Colonel had brought from Europe. For a while there was silence: then a loud outcry, which made the poor mother start.

In another minute Mr. Ward came out, bleeding from a great wound on his head, and behind him Harry, with flaring eyes, and brandishing a little *couteau de chasse* of his grandfather, which hung, with others of the Colonel's weapons, on the library wall.

"I don't care. I did it," says Harry. "I couldn't see this fellow strike my brother; and, as he lifted his hand, I flung the great ruler at him. I couldn't help it. I won't bear it; and if one lifts a hand to me or my brother, I'll have his life," shouts Harry, brandishing the hanger.

The widow gave a great gasp and a sigh as she looked at the young champion and his victim. She must have suffered terribly during the few minutes of the boys' absence; and the stripes which she imagined had been inflicted on the elder had smitten her own heart. She longed to take both boys to it. She was not angry now. Very likely she was delighted with the thought of the younger's prowess and generosity. "You are a very naughty disobedient child," she said, in an exceedingly peaceable voice. "My poor Mr. Ward! What a rebel, to strike you! Papa's great ebony ruler, was it? Lay down that hanger, child. 'Twas General Webb gave it to my papa after the siege of Lille. Let me bathe your wound, my good Mr. Ward, and thank heaven it was no worse. Mountain! Go fetch me some court-plaster out of the middle drawer in the japan cabinet. Here comes George. Put on your coat and waistcoat, child! You were going to take your punishment, sir,

The Tutor in Trouble

and that is sufficient. Ask pardon, Harry, of good Mr. Ward, for your wicked rebellious spirit—I do, with all my heart, I am sure. And guard against your passionate nature, child—and pray to be forgiven. My son, oh, my son!" Here, with a burst of tears which she could no longer control, the little woman threw herself on the neck of her eldest born; whilst Harry, laying the hanger down, went up very feebly to Mr. Ward, and said, "Indeed, I ask your pardon, sir. I couldn't help it; on my honour, I couldn't; nor bear to see my brother struck."

The widow was scared, as after her embrace she looked up at George's pale face. In reply to her eager caresses, he coldly kissed her on the forehead, and separated from her. "You meant for the best, mother," he said, "and I was in the wrong. But the cup is broken; and all the king's horses and all the king's men cannot mend it. There—put the fair side outwards on the mantelpiece, and the wound will not show."

Again Madam Esmond looked at the lad, as he placed the fragments of the poor cup on the ledge where it had always been used to stand. Her power over him was gone. He had dominated her. She was not sorry for the defeat; for women like not only to conquer, but to be conquered; and from that day the young gentleman was master at Castlewood. His mother admired him as he went up to Harry, graciously and condescendingly gave Hal his hand, and said, "Thank you, brother!" as if he were a prince, and Harry a general who had helped him in a great battle.

Then George went up to Mr. Ward, who was still piteously bathing his eye and forehead in the water. "I ask pardon for Hal's violence, sir," George said, in great state. "You see, though we are very young, we are

gentlemen, and cannot brook an insult from strangers. I should have submitted, as it was mamma's desire; but I am glad she no longer entertains it."

"And pray, sir, who is to compensate *me?*" says Mr. Ward; "who is to repair the insult done to *me?*"

"We are very young," says George, with another of his old-fashioned bows. "We shall be fifteen soon. Any compensation that is usual amongst gentlemen—"

"This, sir, to a minister of the Word!" bawls out Ward, starting up, and who knew perfectly well the lads' skill in fence, having a score of times been foiled by the pair of them.

"You are not a clergyman yet. We thought you might like to be considered as a gentleman. We did not know."

"A gentleman! I am a Christian, sir!" says Ward, glaring furiously, and clenching his great fists.

"Well, well, if you won't fight, why don't you forgive?" says Harry. "If you don't forgive, why don't you fight? That's what I call the horns of a dilemma." And he laughed his frank, jolly laugh.

But this was nothing to the laugh a few days afterwards, when, the quarrel having been patched up, along with poor Mr. Ward's eye, the unlucky tutor was holding forth according to his custom. He tried to preach the boys into respect for him, to re-awaken the enthusiasm which the congregation had felt for him; he wrestled with their manifest indifference, he implored heaven to warm their cold hearts again, and to lift up those who were falling back. All was in vain. The widow wept no more at his harangues, was no longer excited by his loudest tropes and similes, nor appeared to be much frightened by the very hottest menaces with which he

peppered his discourse. Nay, she pleaded headache, and would absent herself of an evening, on which occasion the remainder of the little congregation was very cold indeed. One day then, Ward, still making desperate efforts to get back his despised authority, was preaching on the beauty of subordination, the present lax spirit of the age, and the necessity of obeying our spiritual and temporal rulers. "For why, my dear friends," he nobly asked (he was in the habit of asking immensely dull questions, and straightway answering them with corresponding platitudes), "why are governors appointed, but that we should be governed? Why are tutors engaged, but that children should be taught?" (here a look at the boys). "Why are rulers—" Here he paused, looking with a sad, puzzled face at the young gentlemen. He saw in their countenances the double meaning of the unlucky word he had uttered, and stammered, and thumped the table with his fist. "Why, I say, are rulers—"

"*Rulers,*" says George, looking at Harry.

"Rulers!" says Hal, putting his hand to his eye, where the poor tutor still bore marks of the late scuffle. Rulers, o-ho! It was too much. The boys burst out in an explosion of laughter. Mrs. Mountain, who was full of fun, could not help joining in the chorus; and little Fanny, who had always behaved very demurely and silently at these ceremonies, crowed again, and clapped her little hands at the others laughing, not in the least knowing the reason why.

This could not be borne. Ward shut down the book before him; in a few angry, but eloquent and manly words, said he would speak no more in that place; and left Castlewood not in the least regretted by Madam Esmond, who had doted on him three months before.

CHAPTER VI

THE VIRGINIANS BEGIN TO SEE THE WORLD

AFTER the departure of her unfortunate spiritual adviser and chaplain, Madam Esmond and her son seemed to be quite reconciled: but although George never spoke of the quarrel with his mother, it must have weighed upon the boy's mind very painfully, for he had a fever soon after the last recounted domestic occurrences, during which illness his brain once or twice wandered, when he shrieked out, "Broken! Broken! It never, never can be mended!" to the silent terror of his mother, who sat watching the poor child as he tossed wakeful upon his midnight bed. His malady defied her skill, and increased in spite of all the nostrums which the good widow kept in her closet and administered so freely to her people. She had to undergo another humiliation, and one day little Mr. Dempster beheld her at his door on horseback. She had ridden through the snow on her pony, to implore him to give his aid to her poor boy. "I shall bury my resentment, Madam," said he, "as your lady-

ship buried your pride. Please God, I may be time enough to help my dear young pupil!" So he put up his lancet, and his little provision of medicaments; called his only negro-boy after him, shut up his lonely hut, and once more returned to Castlewood. That night and for some days afterwards it seemed very likely that poor Harry would become heir of Castlewood; but by Mr. Dempster's skill the fever was got over, the intermittent attacks diminished in intensity, and George was restored almost to health again. A change of air, a voyage even to England, was recommended, but the widow had quarrelled with her children's relatives there, and owned with contrition that she had been too hasty. A journey to the north and east was determined on, and the two young gentlemen, with Mr. Dempster as their tutor and a couple of servants to attend them, took a voyage to New York, and thence up the beautiful Hudson river to Albany, where they were received by the first gentry of the province, and thence into the French provinces, where they had the best recommendations, and were hospitably entertained by the French gentry. Harry camped with the Indians, and took furs and shot bears. George, who never cared for field-sports and whose health was still delicate, was a special favourite with the French ladies, who were accustomed to see very few young English gentlemen speaking the French language so readily as our young gentlemen. George especially perfected his accent so as to be able to pass for a Frenchman. He had the *bel air* completely, every person allowed. He danced the minuet elegantly. He learned the latest imported French catches and songs, and played them beautifully on his violin, and would have sung them too but that his voice broke at this time, and changed from treble to

bass; and to the envy of poor Harry, who was absent on a bear-hunt, he even had an affair of honour with a young ensign of the regiment of Auvergne, the Chevalier de la Jabotière, whom he pinked in the shoulder, and with whom he afterwards swore an eternal friendship. Madame de Mouchy, the superintendent's lady, said the mother was blest who had such a son, and wrote a complimentary letter to Madam Esmond upon Mr. George's behaviour. I fear Mr. Whitfield would not have been over-pleased with the widow's elation on hearing of her son's prowess.

When the lads returned home at the end of ten delightful months, their mother was surprised at their growth and improvement. George especially was so grown as to come up to his younger-born brother. The boys could hardly be distinguished one from another, especially when their hair was powdered; but that ceremony being too cumbrous for country-life, each of the gentlemen commonly wore his own hair, George his raven black, and Harry his light locks tied with a ribbon.

The reader who has been so kind as to look over the first pages of the lad's simple biography, must have observed that Mr. George Warrington was of a jealous and suspicious disposition, most generous and gentle and incapable of an untruth, and though too magnanimous to revenge, almost incapable of forgiving any injury. George left home with no good will towards an honourable gentleman, whose name afterwards became one of the most famous in the world; and he returned from his journey not in the least altered in his opinion of his mother's and grandfather's friend. Mr. Washington, though then but just of age, looked and felt much older. He always exhibited an extraordinary simplicity and

gravity: he had managed his mother's and his family's affairs from a very early age, and was treated by all his friends and the gentry of his county more respectfully than persons twice his senior.

Mrs. Mountain, Madam Esmond's friend and companion, who dearly loved the two boys and her patroness, in spite of many quarrels with the latter, and daily threats of parting, was a most amusing, droll letter-writer, and used to write to the two boys on their travels. Now, Mrs. Mountain was of a jealous turn likewise; especially she had a great turn for match-making, and fancied that everybody had a design to marry everybody else. There scarce came an unmarried man to Castlewood but Mountain imagined the gentleman had an eye towards the mistress of the mansion. She was positive that odious Mr. Ward intended to make love to the widow, and pretty sure the latter liked him. She knew that Mr. Washington wanted to be married, was certain that such a shrewd young gentleman would look out for a rich wife, and as for the differences of ages, what matter that the Major (major was his rank in the militia) was fifteen years younger than Madam Esmond? They were used to such marriages in the family; my lady her mother was how many years older than the Colonel when she married him?—When she married him and was so jealous that she never would let the poor Colonel out of her sight. The poor Colonel! after his wife, he had been henpecked by his little daughter. And she would take after her mother, and marry again, be sure of that. Madam was a little chit of a woman, not five feet in her highest head-dress and shoes, and Mr. Washington a great tall man of six feet two. Great tall men always married little chits of women: therefore,

Mr. W. *must* be looking after the widow. What could be more clear than the deduction?

She communicated these sage opinions to her boy, as she called George, who begged her, for heavens' sake, to hold her tongue. This she said she could do, but she could not keep her eyes always shut; and she narrated a hundred circumstances which had occurred in the young gentleman's absence, and which tended, as she thought, to confirm her notions. Had Mountain imparted these pretty suspicions to his brother? George asked sternly. No. George was her boy; Harry was his mother's boy. "She likes *him* best, and I like *you* best, George," cries Mountain. "Besides, if I were to speak to him, he would tell your mother in a minute. Poor Harry can keep nothing quiet, and then there would be a pretty quarrel between Madam and me!"

"I beg you to keep *this* quiet, Mountain," said Mr. George, with great dignity, "or you and I shall quarrel too. Neither to me nor to any one else in the world must you mention such an absurd suspicion."

Absurd! Why absurd? Mr. Washington was constantly with the widow. His name was for ever in her mouth. She was never tired of pointing out his virtues and examples to her sons. She consulted him on every question respecting her estate and its management. She never bought a horse or sold a barrel of tobacco without his opinion. There was a room at Castlewood regularly called Mr. Washington's room. He actually leaves his clothes here and his portmanteau when he goes away. "Ah! George, George! One day will come when he *won't* go away," groaned Mountain, who, of course, always returned to the subject of which she was forbidden to speak. Meanwhile Mr. George

adopted towards his mother's favourite a frigid courtesy, at which the honest gentleman chafed but did not care to remonstrate, or a stinging sarcasm, which he would break through as he would burst through so many brambles on those hunting excursions in which he and Harry Warrington rode so constantly together; whilst George, retreating to his tents, read mathematics, and French, and Latin, and sulked in his book-room more and more lonely.

Harry was away from home with some other sporting friends (it is to be feared the young gentleman's acquaintances were not all as eligible as Mr. Washington), when the latter came to pay a visit at Castlewood. He was so peculiarly tender and kind to the mistress there, and received by her with such special cordiality, that George Warrington's jealousy had well nigh broken out in open rupture. But the visit was one of adieu, as it appeared. Major Washington was going on a long and dangerous journey, quite to the western Virginia frontier and beyond it. The French had been for some time past making inroads into our territory. The government at home, as well as those of Virginia and Pennsylvania, were alarmed at this aggressive spirit of the lords of Canada and Louisiana. Some of our settlers had already been driven from their holdings by Frenchmen in arms, and the governors of the British provinces were desirous to stop their incursions, or at any rate to protest against their invasion.

We chose to hold our American colonies by a law that was at least convenient for its framers. The maxim was, that whoever possessed the coast had a right to all the territory inland as far as the Pacific; so that the British charters only laid down the limits of the colonies from

north to south, leaving them quite free from east to west. The French, meanwhile, had their colonies to the north and south, and aimed at connecting them by the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence and the great intermediate lakes and waters lying to the westward of the British possessions. In the year 1748, though peace was signed between the two European kingdoms, the colonial question remained unsettled, to be opened again when either party should be strong enough to urge it. In the year 1753, it came to an issue, on the Ohio river, where the British and French settlers met. To be sure, there existed other people besides French and British, who thought they had a title to the territory about which the children of their White Fathers were battling, namely, the native Indians and proprietors of the soil. But the logicians of St. James's and Versailles wisely chose to consider the matter in dispute as a European and not a Red-man's question, eliminating him from the argument, but employing his tomahawk as it might serve the turn of either litigant.

A company, called the Ohio Company, having grants from the Virginia government of lands along that river, found themselves invaded in their settlements by French military detachments, who roughly ejected the Britons from their holdings. These latter applied for protection to Mr. Dinwiddie, Lieutenant-Governor of Virginia, who determined upon sending an ambassador to the French commanding officer on the Ohio, demanding that the French should desist from their inroads upon the territories of his Majesty King George.

Young Mr. Washington jumped eagerly at the chance of distinction which this service afforded him, and volunteered to leave his home and his rural and

professional pursuits in Virginia, to carry the governor's message to the French officer. Taking a guide, an interpreter, and a few attendants, and following the Indian tracks, in the fall of the year 1753, the intrepid young envoy made his way from Williamsburg almost to the shores of Lake Erie, and found the French commander at Fort le Bœuf. That officer's reply was brief: his orders were to hold the place and drive all the English from it. The French avowed their intention of taking possession of the Ohio. And with this rough answer the messenger from Virginia had to return through danger and difficulty, across lonely forest and frozen river, shaping his course by the compass, and camping at night in the snow by the forest fires.

Harry Warrington cursed his ill fortune that he had been absent from home on a cock-fight, when he might have had chance of sport so much nobler; and on his return from his expedition, which he had conducted with an heroic energy and simplicity, Major Washington was a greater favourite than ever with the lady of Castlewood. She pointed him out as a model to both her sons. "Ah, Harry!" she would say, "think of you, with your cock-fighting and your racing-matches, and the Major away there in the wilderness, watching the French, and battling with the frozen rivers! Ah, George! learning may be a very good thing, but I wish my eldest son were doing something in the service of his country!"

"I desire no better than to go home and seek for employment, Ma'am," says George. "You surely will not have me serve under Mr. Washington, in his new regiment, or ask a commission from Mr. Dinwiddie?"

"An Esmond can only serve with the king's commission," says Madam, "and as for asking a favour from

Mr. Lieutenant-Governor Dinwiddie, I would rather beg my bread."

Mr. Washington was at this time raising such a regiment as with the scanty pay and patronage of the Virginian government, he could get together, and proposed with the help of these men-of-war, to put a more peremptory veto upon the French invaders than the solitary ambassador had been enabled to lay. A small force under another officer, Colonel Trent, had been already despatched to the west, with orders to fortify themselves so as to be able to resist any attack of the enemy. The French troops, greatly outnumbering ours, came up with the English outposts, who were fortifying themselves at a place on the confines of Pennsylvania where the great city of Pittsburg now stands. A Virginian officer with but forty men was in no condition to resist twenty times that number of Canadians, who appeared before his incomplete works. He was suffered to draw back without molestation; and the French, taking possession of his fort, strengthened it, and christened it by the name of the Canadian governor, Du Quesne. Up to this time no actual blow of war had been struck. The troops representing the hostile nations were in presence —the guns were loaded, but no one as yet had cried "Fire." It was strange that in a savage forest of Pennsylvania, a young Virginian officer should fire a shot, and waken up a war which was to last for sixty years, which was to cover his own country and pass into Europe, to cost France her American colonies, to sever ours from us, and create the great Western republic; to rage over the Old World when extinguished in the New; and, of all the myriads engaged in the vast contest, to leave

the prize of the greatest fame with him who struck the first blow!

He little knew of the fate in store for him. A simple gentleman, anxious to serve his king and do his duty, he volunteered for the first service, and executed it with admirable fidelity. In the ensuing year he took the command of the small body of provincial troops with which he marched to repel the Frenchmen. He came up with their advanced guard and fired upon them, killing their leader. After this he had himself to fall back with his troops, and was compelled to capitulate to the superior French force. On the 4th of July, 1754, the Colonel marched out with his troops from the little fort where he had hastily entrenched himself (and which they called Fort Necessity), gave up the place to the conqueror, and took his way home.

His command was over; his regiment disbanded after the fruitless, inglorious march and defeat. Saddened and humbled in spirit, the young officer presented himself after a while to his old friends at Castlewood. He was very young; before he set forth on his first campaign he may have indulged in exaggerated hopes of success, and uttered them. "I was angry when I parted from you," he said to George Warrington, holding out his hand, which the other eagerly took. "You seemed to scorn me and my regiment, George. I thought you laughed at us, and your ridicule made me angry. I boasted too much of what we would do."

"Nay, you have done your best, George," says the other, who quite forgot his previous jealousy in his old comrade's misfortune. "Everybody knows that a hundred and fifty starving men with scarce a round of am-

munition left, could not face five times their number perfectly armed, and everybody who knows Mr. Washington knows that he would do his duty. Harry and I saw the French in Canada last year. They obey but one will: in our provinces each governor has his own. They were royal troops the French sent against you. . . ."

"Oh, but that some of ours were here!" cries Madam Esmond, tossing her head up. "I promise you a few good English regiments would make the white-coats run."

"You think nothing of the provincials: and I must say nothing now we have been so unlucky," said the Colonel, gloomily. "You made much of me when I was here before. Don't you remember what victories you prophesied for me—how much I boasted myself very likely over your good wine? All those fine dreams are over now. 'Tis kind of your ladyship to receive a poor beaten fellow as you do:" and the young soldier hung down his head.

George Warrington, with his extreme acute sensibility, was touched at the other's emotion and simple testimony of sorrow under defeat. He was about to say something friendly to Mr. Washington, had not his mother, to whom the Colonel had been speaking, replied herself: "Kind of us to receive you, Colonel Washington!" said the widow. "I never heard that when men were unhappy, our sex were less their friends."

And she made the Colonel a very fine curtsey, which straightway caused her son to be more jealous of him than ever.

CHAPTER VII

PREPARATIONS FOR WAR

SURELY no man can have better claims to sympathy than bravery, youth, good looks, and misfortune. Madam Esmond might have had twenty sons, and yet had a right to admire her young soldier. Mr. Washington's room was more than ever Mr. Washington's room now. She raved about him and praised him in all companies. She more than ever pointed out his excellences to her sons, contrasting his sterling qualities with Harry's love of pleasure (the wild boy!) and George's listless musings over his books. George was not disposed to like Mr. Washington any better for his mother's extravagant praises. He coaxed the jealous demon within him until he must have become a perfect pest to himself and all the friends round about him. He uttered jokes so deep that his simple mother did not

know their meaning, but sat bewildered at his sarcasms, and powerless what to think of his moody, saturnine humour.

Meanwhile, public events were occurring which were to influence the fortunes of all our homely family. The quarrel between the French and English North Americans, from being a provincial, had grown to be a national quarrel. Reinforcements from France had already arrived in Canada; and English troops were expected in Virginia. "Alas! my dear friend!" wrote Madame la Présidente de Mouchy, from Quebec, to her young friend George Warrington. "How contrary is the destiny to us. I see you quitting the embrace of an adored mother to precipitate yourself in the arms of Bellona. I see you pass wounded after combats. I hesitate almost to wish victory to our lilies when I behold you ranged under the banners of the Leopard. There are enmities which the heart does not recognise—ours assuredly are at peace among these tumults. All here love and salute you as well as Monsieur the Bear-hunter, your brother (that cold Hippolyte who preferred the chase to the soft conversation of our ladies!). Your friend, your enemy, the Chevalier de la Jabotière, burns to meet on the field of Mars his generous rival. M. du Quesne spoke of you last night at supper. M. du Quesne, my husband, send affectuous remembrances to their young friend, with which are ever joined those of your sincere Présidente de Mouchy."

"The banner of the Leopard," of which George's fair correspondent wrote, was, indeed, flung out to the winds, and a number of the king's soldiers were rallied round it. It was resolved to wrest from the French all the conquests they had made upon British dominion. A couple of regiments were raised and paid by the king in Amer-

ica, and a fleet with a couple more was despatched from home under an experienced commander. In February, 1755, Commodore Keppel, in the famous ship "Centurion," in which Anson had made his voyage round the world, anchored in Hampton Roads with two ships of war under his command, and having on board General Braddock, his staff, and a part of his troops. Mr. Braddock was appointed by the Duke. A hundred years ago the Duke of Cumberland was called The Duke par excellence in England—as another famous warrior has since been called. Not so great a Duke certainly was that first-named Prince as his party esteemed him, and surely not so bad a one as his enemies have painted him. A fleet of transports speedily followed Prince William's general, bringing stores, and men, and money in plenty.

The great man landed his troops at Alexandria on the Potomac river, and repaired to Annapolis in Maryland, where he ordered the governors of the different colonies to meet him in council, urging them each to call upon their respective provinces to help the common cause in this strait.

The arrival of the General and his little army caused a mighty excitement all through the provinces, and nowhere greater than at Castlewood. Harry was off forthwith to see the troops under canvas at Alexandria. The sight of their lines delighted him, and the inspiring music of their fifes and drums. He speedily made acquaintance with the officers of both regiments; he longed to join in the expedition upon which they were bound, and was a welcome guest at their mess.

Madam Esmond was pleased that her sons should have an opportunity of enjoying the society of gentlemen of good fashion from England. She had no doubt their

company was improving, that the English gentlemen were very different from the horse-racing, cock-fighting Virginian squires, with whom Master Harry would associate, and the lawyers, and pettifoggers, and toad-eaters at the Lieutenant-Governor's table. Madam Esmond had a very keen eye for detecting flatterers in other folks' houses. Against the little knot of official people at Williamsburg, she was especially satirical, and had no patience with their etiquettes and squabbles for precedence.

As for the company of the King's officers, Mr. Harry and his elder brother both smiled at their mamma's compliments to the elegance and propriety of the gentlemen of the camp. If the good lady had but known all, if she could but have heard their jokes and the songs which they sang over their wine and punch, if she could have seen the condition of many of them as they were carried away to their lodgings, she would scarce have been so ready to recommend their company to her sons. Men and officers swaggered the country round, and frightened the peaceful farm and village folk with their riot: the General raved and stormed against his troops for their disorder; against the provincials for their traitorous niggardliness; the soldiers took possession almost as of a conquered country, they scorned the provincials, they insulted the wives even of their Indian allies, who had come to join the English warriors, upon their arrival in America, and to march with them against the French. The General was compelled to forbid the Indian women his camp. Amazed and outraged, their husbands retired, and but a few months afterwards their services were lost to him, when their aid would have been most precious.

Some stories against the gentlemen of the camp,

Madam Esmond might have heard, but she would have none of them. Soldiers would be soldiers, that everybody knew. Those officers who came over to Castlewood on her sons' invitation were most polite gentlemen, and such indeed was the case. The widow received them most graciously, and gave them the best sport the country afforded. Presently, the General himself sent polite messages to the mistress of Castlewood. His father had served with hers under the glorious Marlborough, and Colonel Esmond's name was still known and respected in England. With her ladyship's permission, General Braddock would have the honour of waiting upon her at Castlewood, and paying his respects to the daughter of so meritorious an officer.

If she had known the cause of Mr. Braddock's politeness, perhaps his compliments would not have charmed Madam Esmond so much. The Commander-in-Chief held levees at Alexandria, and among the gentry of the country who paid him their respects, were our twins of Castlewood, who mounted their best nags, took with them their last London suits, and, with their two negro-boys in smart liveries behind them, rode in state to wait upon the great man. He was sulky and angry with the provincial gentry, and scarce took any notice of the young gentlemen, only asking casually, of his aide-de-camp at dinner, who the young Squire Gawkeys were in blue and gold and red waistcoats?

Mr. Dinwiddie, the Lieutenant-Governor of Virginia, the Agent from Pennsylvania, and a few more gentlemen, happened to be dining with his Excellency. "Oh!" says Mr. Dinwiddie, "those are the sons of the Princess Pocahontas;" on which, with a tremendous oath, the General asked, "Who the deuce was she?"

Dinwiddie, who did not love her, having indeed undergone a hundred pertnesses from the imperious little lady, now gave a disrespectful and ridiculous account of Madam Esmond, made merry with her pomposity and immense pretensions, and entertained General Braddock with anecdotes regarding her, until his Excellency fell asleep.

When he awoke Dinwiddie was gone, but the Philadelphia gentleman was still at table, deep in conversation with the officers there present. The General took up the talk where it had been left when he fell asleep, and spoke of Madam Esmond in curt, disrespectful terms, such as soldiers were in the habit of using in those days, and asking, again, what was the name of the old fool about whom Dinwiddie had been talking? He then broke into expressions of contempt and wrath against the gentry, and the country in general.

Mr. Franklin of Philadelphia repeated the widow's name, took quite a different view of her character from that Mr. Dinwiddie had given, seemed to know a good deal about her, her father, and her estate; as, indeed, he did about every man or subject which came under discussion; explained to the General that Madam Esmond had beeves, and horses, and stores in plenty, which might be very useful at the present juncture, and recommended him to conciliate her by all means. The General had already made up his mind that Mr. Franklin was a very shrewd, intelligent person, and graciously ordered an aide-de-camp to invite the two young men to the next day's dinner. When they appeared he was very pleasant and good-natured; the gentlemen of the General's family made much of them. They behaved, as became persons of their name, with modesty and good-breeding;

they returned home delighted with their entertainment, nor was their mother less pleased at the civilities which his Excellency had shown to her boys. In reply to Braddock's message, Madam Esmond penned a billet in her best style, acknowledging his politeness, and begging his Excellency to fix the time when she might have the honour to receive him at Castlewood.

We may be sure that the arrival of the army and the approaching campaign formed the subject of continued conversation in the Castlewood family. To make the campaign was the dearest wish of Harry's life. He dreamed only of war and battle; he was for ever with the officers at Williamsburg: he scoured and cleaned and polished all the guns and swords in the house; he renewed the amusements of his childhood, and had the negroes under arms. His mother, who had a gallant spirit, knew that the time was come when one of her boys must leave her and serve the king. She scarce dared to think on whom the lot should fall. She admired and respected the elder, but she felt that she loved the younger boy with all the passion of her heart.

Eager as Harry was to be a soldier, and with all his thoughts bent on that glorious scheme, he too scarcely dared to touch on the subject nearest his heart. Once or twice when he ventured on it with George, the latter's countenance wore an ominous look. Harry had a feudal attachment for his elder brother, worshipped him with an extravagant regard, and in all things gave way to him as the chief. So Harry saw, to his infinite terror, how George, too, in his grave way, was occupied with military matters. George had the wars of Eugene and Marlborough down from his bookshelves, all the military books of his grandfather, and the most warlike of Plu-

tarch's lives. He and Dempster were practising with the foils again. The old Scotchman was an adept in the military art, though somewhat shy of saying where he learned it.

Madam Esmond made her two boys the bearers of the letter in reply to his Excellency's message, accompanying her note with such large and handsome presents for the General's staff and the officers of the two Royal Regiments, as caused the General more than once to thank Mr. Franklin for having been the means of bringing this welcome ally into the camp. "Would not one of the young gentlemen like to see the campaign?" the General asked. "A friend of theirs, who often spoke of them—Mr. Washington, who had been unlucky in the affair of last year—had already promised to join him as aide-de-camp, and his Excellency would gladly take another young Virginian gentleman into his family." Harry's eyes brightened and his face flushed at this offer. "He would like with all his heart to go!" he cried out. George said, looking hard at his younger brother, that one of them would be proud to attend his Excellency, whilst it would be the other's duty to take care of their mother at home. Harry allowed his senior to speak. His will was even still obedient to George's. However much he desired to go, he would not pronounce until George had declared himself. He longed so for the campaign, that the actual wish made him timid. He dared not speak on the matter as he went home with George. They rode for miles in silence, or strove to talk upon indifferent subjects; each knowing what was passing in the other's mind, and afraid to bring the awful question to an issue.

On their arrival at home the boys told their mother of General Braddock's offer. "I knew it must happen," she said; "at such a crisis in the country our family must come forward. Have you—have you settled yet which of you is to leave me?" and she looked anxiously from one to another, dreading to hear either name.

"The youngest ought to go, mother; of course I ought to go!" cries Harry, turning very red.

"Of course, he ought," said Mrs. Mountain, who was present at their talk.

"There! Mountain says so! I told you so!" again cries Harry, with a sidelong look at George.

"The head of the family ought to go, mother," says George, sadly.

"No! No! you are ill, and have never recovered your fever. Ought he to go, Mountain?"

"You would make the best soldier, I know that, dearest Hal. You and George Washington are great friends, and could travel well together, and he does not care for me, nor I for him, however much he is admired in the family. But, you see, 'tis the law of Honour, my Harry." (He here spoke to his brother with a voice of extraordinary kindness and tenderness.) "The grief I have had in this matter has been that I must refuse thee. I must go. Had Fate given you the benefit of that extra half-hour of life which I have had before you, it would have been your lot, and you would have claimed your right to go first, you know you would."

"Yes, George," said poor Harry, "I own I should."

"You will stay at home, and take care of Castlewood and our mother. If anything happens to me, you are here to fill my place. I would like to give way, my dear, as you, I know, would lay down your life to serve me.

But each of us must do his duty. What would our grandfather say if he were here?"

The mother looked proudly at her two sons. "My papa would say that his boys were gentlemen," faltered Madam Esmond, and left the young men, not choosing, perhaps, to show the emotion which was filling her heart. It was speedily known amongst the servants that Mr. George was going on the campaign. Dinah, George's foster-mother, was loud in her lamentations at losing him; Phillis, Harry's old nurse, was as noisy because Master George, as usual, was preferred over Master Harry. Sady, George's servant, made preparations to follow his master, bragging incessantly of the deeds which he would do; while Gumbo, Harry's boy, pretended to whimper at being left behind, though, at home, Gumbo was anything but a fire-eater.

But, of all in the house, Mrs. Mountain was the most angry at George's determination to go on the campaign. She had no patience with him. He did not know what he was doing by leaving home. She begged, implored, insisted that he should alter his determination; and voted that nothing but mischief would come from his departure.

George was surprised at the pertinacity of the good lady's opposition. "I know, Mountain," said he, "that Harry would be the better soldier; but, after all, to go is my duty."

"To stay is your duty!" says Mountain, with a stamp of her foot.

"Why did not my mother own it when we talked of the matter just now?"

"Your mother!" says Mrs. Mountain, with a most gloomy, sardonic laugh; "your mother, my poor child!"

"What is the meaning of that mournful countenance, Mountain?"

"It may be that your mother wishes you away, George!" Mrs. Mountain continued, wagging her head. "It may be, my poor deluded boy, that you will find a father-in-law when you come back."

"What in heaven do you mean?" cried George, the blood rushing into his face.

"Do you suppose I have no eyes, and cannot see what is going on? I tell you, child, that Colonel Washington wants a rich wife. When you are gone, he will ask your mother to marry him, and you will find him master here when you come back. That is why you ought not to go away, you poor, unhappy, simple boy! Don't you see how fond she is of him? how much she makes of him? how she is always holding him up to you, to Harry, to everybody who comes here?"

"But he is going on the campaign, too," cried George.

"He is going on the marrying campaign, child!" insisted the widow.

"Nay; General Braddock himself told me that Mr. Washington had accepted the appointment of aide-de-camp."

"An artifice! an artifice to blind you, my poor child!" cries Mountain. "He will be wounded and come back—you will see if he does not. I have proofs of what I say to you—proofs under his own hand—look here!" And she took from her pocket a piece of paper in Mr. Washington's well-known handwriting.

"How came you by this paper?" asked George, turning ghastly pale.

"I—I found it in the Major's chamber!" says Mrs. Mountain, with a shamefaced look.

"You read the private letters of a guest staying in our house?" cried George. "For shame! I will not look at the paper!" And he flung it from him on to the fire before him.

"I could not help it, George; 'twas by chance, I give you my word, by the merest chance. You know Governor Dinwiddie is to have the Major's room, and the state-room is got ready for Mr. Braddock, and we are expecting ever so much company, and I had to take the things which the Major leaves here—he treats the house just as if it was his own already—into his new room, and this half-sheet of paper fell out of his writing-book, and I just gave one look at it by the merest chance, and when I saw what it was it was my duty to read it."

"Oh, you are a martyr to duty, Mountain!" George said grimly. "I dare say Mrs. Bluebeard thought it was her duty to look through the keyhole."

"I never *did* look through the keyhole, George. It's a shame you should say so! I, who have watched and tended, and nursed you, like a mother; who have sat up whole weeks with you in fevers, and carried you from your bed to the sofa in these arms. There, sir, I don't want you there *now*. My dear Mountain, indeed! Don't tell me! You fly into a passion, and call names, and wound my feelings, who have loved you like your mother—like your mother?—I only hope she may love you half as well. I say you are all ungrateful. My Mr. Mountain was a wretch, and every one of you is as bad."

There was but a smouldering log or two in the fireplace, and no doubt Mountain saw that the paper was in no danger as it lay amongst the ashes, or she would have seized it at the risk of burning her own fingers, and ere she uttered the above passionate defence of her conduct.

Perhaps George was absorbed in his dismal thoughts; perhaps his jealousy overpowered him, for he did not resist any further when she stooped down and picked up the paper.

"You should thank your stars, child, that I saved the letter," cried she. "See! here are his own words, in his great big handwriting like a clerk. It was not my fault that he wrote them, or that I found them. Read for yourself, I say, George Warrington, and be thankful that your poor dear old Mounty is watching over you!"

Every word and letter upon the unlucky paper was perfectly clear. George's eyes could not help taking in the contents of the document before him. "Not a word of this, Mountain," he said, giving her a frightful look. "I—I will return this paper to Mr. Washington."

Mountain was scared at his face, at the idea of what she had done, and what might ensue. When his mother, with alarm in her countenance, asked him at dinner what ailed him that he looked so pale? "Do you suppose, Madam," says he, filling himself a great bumper of wine, "that to leave such a tender mother as you does not cause me cruel grief?"

The good lady could not understand his words, his strange, fierce looks, and stranger laughter. He bantered all at the table; called to the servants and laughed at them, and drank more and more. Each time the door was opened, he turned towards it; and so did Mountain, with a guilty notion that Mr. Washington would step in.

CHAPTER VIII

IN WHICH GEORGE SUFFERS FROM A COMMON DISEASE

ON the day appointed for Madam Esmond's entertainment to the General, the house of Castlewood was set out with the greatest splendour; and Madam Esmond arrayed herself in a much more magnificent dress than she was accustomed to wear. Indeed, she wished to do every honour to her guest, and to make the entertainment—which, in reality, was a sad one to her—as pleasant as might be for her company. The General's new aide-de-camp was the first to arrive. The widow received him in the covered gallery before the house. He dismounted at the steps, and his servants led away his horses to the well-known quarters. No young gentleman in the colony

was better mounted or a better horseman than Mr. Washington.

For a while ere the Colonel retired to divest himself of his riding-boots, he and his hostess paced the gallery in talk. She had much to say to him; she had to hear from him a confirmation of his own appointment as aide-de-camp to General Braddock, and to speak of her son's approaching departure. The negro-servants bearing the dishes for the approaching feast were passing perpetually as they talked. They descended the steps down to the rough lawn in front of the house, and paced awhile in the shade. Mr. Washington announced his Excellency's speedy approach, with Mr. Franklin of Pennsylvania in his coach.

This Mr. Franklin had been a common printer's boy, Mrs. Esmond had heard; a pretty pass things were coming to when such persons rode in the coach of the Commander-in-Chief! Mr. Washington said, a more shrewd and sensible gentleman never rode in coach or walked on foot. Mrs. Esmond thought the Colonel was too liberally disposed towards this gentleman; but Mr. Washington stoutly maintained against the widow that the printer was a most ingenious, useful, and meritorious man.

"I am glad, at least, that, as my boy is going to make the campaign, he will not be with tradesmen, but with gentlemen, with gentlemen of honour and fashion," says Madam Esmond, in her most stately manner.

Mr. Washington had seen the gentlemen of honour and fashion over their cups, and perhaps thought that all their sayings and doings were not precisely such as would tend to instruct or edify a young man on his entrance into life; but he wisely chose to tell no tales out

of school, and said that Harry and George, now they were coming into the world, must take their share of good and bad, and hear what both sorts had to say.

"To be with a veteran officer of the finest army in the world," faltered the widow; "with gentlemen who have been bred in the midst of the Court; with friends of his Royal Highness the Duke—"

The widow's friend only inclined his head. He did not choose to allow his countenance to depart from its usual handsome gravity.

"And with you, dear Colonel Washington, by whom my father always set such store. You don't know how much he trusted in you. You will take care of my boy, sir, will not you? You are but five years older, yet I trust to you more than to his seniors; my father always told the children, I always bade them, to look up to Mr. Washington."

"You know I would have done anything to win Colonel Esmond's favour. Madam, how much would I not venture to merit his daughter's?"

The gentleman bowed with not too ill a grace. The lady blushed, and dropped one of the lowest curtseys. (Madam Esmond's curtsey was considered unrivalled over the whole province.) "Mr. Washington," she said, "will be always sure of a mother's affection, whilst he gives so much of his to her children." And so saying she gave him her hand, which he kissed with profound politeness. The little lady presently re-entered her mansion, leaning upon the tall young officer's arm. Here they were joined by George, who came to them, accurately powdered and richly attired, saluting his parent and his friend alike with low and respectful bows. Now-a-days, a young man walks into his mother's room with

hob-nailed high-lows, and a wide-awake on his head; and instead of making her a bow, puffs a cigar into her face.

But George, though he made the lowest possible bow to Mr. Washington and his mother, was by no means in good humour with either of them. A polite smile played round the lower part of his countenance, whilst watchfulness and wrath glared out from the two upper windows. What had been said or done? Nothing that might not have been performed or uttered before the most decent, polite, or pious company. Why then should Madam Esmond continue to blush, and the brave Colonel to look somewhat red, as he shook his young friend's hand?

The Colonel asked Mr. George if he had had good sport? "No," says George, curtly. "Have you?" And then he looked at the picture of his father, which hung in the parlour.

The Colonel, not a talkative man ordinarily, straightway entered into a long description of his sport, and described where he had been in the morning, and what woods he had hunted with the king's officers; how many birds they had shot, and what game they had brought down. Though not a jocular man ordinarily, the Colonel made a long description of Mr. Braddock's heavy person and great boots, as he floundered through the Virginian woods, hunting, as they called it, with a pack of dogs gathered from various houses, with a pack of negroes barking as loud as the dogs, and actually shooting the deer when they came in sight of him. "Great God, sir!" says Mr. Braddock, puffing and blowing, "what would Sir Robert have said in Norfolk, to see a man hunting with a fowling-piece in his hand, and a pack of dogs actually laid on to a turkey!"

"Indeed, Colonel, you are vastly comical this afternoon!" cries Madam Esmond, with a neat little laugh, whilst her son listened to the story, looking more glum than ever. "What Sir Robert is there at Norfolk? Is he one of the newly arrived army-gentlemen?"

"The General meant Norfolk at home, Madam, not Norfolk in Virginia," said Colonel Washington. "Mr. Braddock had been talking of a visit to Sir Robert Walpole, who lived in that county, and of the great hunts the old Minister kept there, and of his grand palace, and his pictures at Houghton. I should like to see a good field and a good fox-chase at home better than any sight in the world," the honest sportsman added with a sigh.

"Nevertheless, there is good sport here, as I was saying," said young Esmond, with a sneer.

"What sport?" cries the other, looking at him.

"Why, sure you know, without looking at me so fiercely, and stamping your foot, as if you were going to charge me with the foils. Are you not the best sportsman of the country-side? Are there not all the fish of the field, and the beasts of the trees, and the fowls of the sea—no—the fish of the trees, and the beasts of the sea—and the—bah! You know what I mean. I mean shad, and salmon, and rockfish, and roe-deer, and hogs, and buffaloes, and bisons, and elephants, for what I know. I'm no sportsman."

"No, indeed," said Mr. Washington, with a look of scarcely repressed scorn.

"Yes, I understand you. I am a milksop. I have been bred at my mamma's knee. Look at these pretty apron-strings, Colonel! Who would not like to be tied to them? See of what a charming colour they are! I

remember when they were black—that was for my grandfather."

"And who would not mourn for such a gentleman?" said the Colonel, as the widow, surprised, looked at her son.

"And, indeed, I wish my grandfather were here, and would resurge, as he promises to do on his tombstone; and would bring my father, the Ensign, with him."

"Ah, Harry!" cries Mrs. Esmond, bursting into tears, as at this juncture her second son entered the room —in just such another suit, gold-corded frock, braided waistcoat, silver-hilted sword, and solitaire as that which his elder brother wore. "Oh, Harry, Harry!" cries Madam Esmond, and flies to her younger son.

"What is it, mother?" asks Harry, taking her in his arms. "What is the matter, Colonel?"

"Upon my life, it would puzzle me to say," answered the Colonel, biting his lips.

"A mere question, Hal, about pink ribbons, which I think vastly becoming to our mother; as, no doubt, the Colonel does."

"Sir, will you please to speak for yourself?" cried the Colonel, bustling up, and then sinking his voice again.

"He speaks too much for himself," wept the widow.

"I protest I don't any more know the source of these tears, than the source of the Nile," said George, "and if the picture of my father were to begin to cry, I should almost as much wonder at the paternal tears. What have I uttered? An allusion to ribbons! Is there some poisoned pin in them, which has been stuck into my mother's heart by a guilty fiend of a London mantua-maker? I professed to wish to be led in these lovely reins all my life long," and he turned a pirouette on his scarlet heels.

"George Warrington! what devil's dance are you dancing now?" asked Harry, who loved his mother, who loved Mr. Washington, but who, of all creatures, loved and admired his brother George.

"My dear child, you do not understand dancing—you care not for the politer arts—you can get no more music out of a spinnet than by pulling a dead hog by the ear. By nature you were made for a man—a man of war—I do not mean a seventy-four, Colonel George, like that hulk which brought the hulking Mr. Braddock into our river. His Excellency, too, is a man of warlike turn, a follower of the sports of the field. I am a milksop, as I have had the honour to say."

"You never showed it yet. You beat that great Maryland man was twice your size," breaks out Harry.

"Under compulsion, Harry. 'Tis *tupto*, my lad, or else 'tis *tuptomai*, as thy breech well knew when we followed school. But I am of a quiet turn, and would never lift my hand to pull a trigger, no, nor a nose, nor anything but a rose," and here he took and handled one of Madam Esmond's bright pink apron ribbons. "I hate sporting, which you and the Colonel love, and I want to shoot nothing alive, not a turkey, nor a titmouse, nor an ox, nor an ass, nor anything that has ears. Those curls of Mr. Washington's are prettily powdered."

The militia colonel, who had been offended by the first part of the talk, and very much puzzled by the last, had taken a modest draught from the great china bowl of apple toddy which stood to welcome the guests in this as in all Virginian houses, and was further cooling himself by pacing the balcony in a very stately manner.

Again almost reconciled with the elder, the appeased mother stood giving a hand to each of her sons. George

put his disengaged hand on Harry's shoulder. "I say one thing, George," says he with a flushing face.

"Say twenty things, Don Enrico," cries the other.

"If you are not fond of sporting and that, and don't care for killing game and hunting, being cleverer than me, why shouldst thou not stop at home and be quiet, and let me go out with Colonel George and Mr. Braddock? —that's what I say," says Harry, delivering himself of his speech.

The widow looked eagerly from the dark-haired to the fair-haired boy. She knew not from which she would like to part.

"One of our family must go because honneur oblige, and my name being number one, number one must go first," says George.

"Told you so," said poor Harry.

"One must stay, or who is to look after mother at home? We cannot afford to be both scalped by Indians or fricasseed by French."

"Fricasseed by French!" cries Harry; "the best troops of the world, Englishmen! I should like to see them fricasseed by the French! What a mortal thrashing you will give them!" and the brave lad sighed to think he should not be present at the *battue*.

George sat down to the harpsichord and played and sang "Malbrook s'en va t'en guerre Mironton mironton mirontaine," at the sound of which music the gentleman from the balcony entered. "I am playing 'God save the King,' Colonel, in compliment to the new expedition."

"I never know whether thou art laughing or in earnest," said the simple gentleman, "but surely methinks that is not the air."

George performed ever so many trills and quavers upon his harpsichord, and their guest watched him, wondering, perhaps, that a gentleman of George's condition could set himself to such an effeminate business. Then the Colonel took out his watch, saying that his Excellency's coach would be here almost immediately, and asking leave to retire to his apartment, and put himself in a fit condition to appear before her ladyship's company.

"Colonel Washington knows the way to his room pretty well!" said George, from the harpsichord, looking over his shoulder, but never offering to stir.

"Let *me* show the Colonel to his chamber," cried the widow, in great wrath, and sailed out of the apartment, followed by the enraged and bewildered Colonel, as George continued crashing among the keys. Her high-spirited guest felt himself insulted, he could hardly say how; he was outraged and he could not speak; he was almost stifling with anger.

Harry Warrington remarked their friend's condition. "For heaven's sake, George, what does this all mean?" he asked his brother. "Why shouldn't he kiss her hand?" (George had just before fetched out his brother from their library, to watch this harmless salute.) "I tell you it is nothing but common kindness."

"Nothing but common kindness!" shrieked out George. "Look at that, Hal! Is that common kindness?" and he showed his junior the unlucky paper over which he had been brooding for some time. It was but a fragment, though the meaning was indeed clear without the preceding text.

The paper commenced . . . "*is older than myself, but I, again, am older than my years; and you know,*

dear brother, have ever been considered a sober person. All children are better for a father's superintendence, and her two, I trust, will find in me a tender friend and guardian."

"Friend and guardian! Curse him!" shrieked out George, clenching his fists—and his brother read on:

"*. . . The flattering offer which General Braddock hath made me, will, of course, oblige me to postpone this matter until after the campaign. When we have given the French a sufficient drubbing, I shall return to repose under my own vine and fig-tree."*

"He means Castlewood. *These* are his vines," George cries again, shaking his fist at the creepers sunning themselves on the wall.

"*. . . Under my own vine and fig-tree; where I hope soon to present my dear brother to his new sister-in-law. She has a pretty Scripture name, which is . . ."*—and here the document ended.

"Which is Rachel," George went on bitterly. "Rachel is by no means weeping for her children, and has every desire to be comforted. Now, Harry! Let us up stairs at once, kneel down as becomes us, and say, 'Dear papa, welcome to your house of Castlewood.'"

CHAPTER IX

HOSPITALITIES

IS EXCELLENCY the Commander-in-Chief set forth to pay his visit to Madam Esmond in such a state and splendour as became the first personage in all his Majesty's colonies, plantations, and possessions of North America. His guard of dragoons preceded him out of Williamsburg in the midst of an immense shouting and yelling of a loyal, and principally negro, population. The General rode in his own coach. Captain Talmadge, his Excellency's Master of the Horse, attended him at the door of the ponderous emblazoned vehicle, riding by the side of the carriage during the journey from Williamsburg to Madam Esmond's house. Major Danvers, aide-de-camp, sat in the front of the carriage with the little postmaster from Philadelphia, Mr. Franklin, who, printer's boy as he had been, was a wonderful shrewd person, as his Excellency and the gentlemen of his family were fain to acknow-

ledge, having a quantity of the most curious information respecting the colony, and regarding England too, where Mr. Franklin had been more than once. "'Twas extraordinary how a person of such humble origin should have acquired such a variety of learning and such a politeness of breeding too, Mr. Franklin!" his Excellency was pleased to observe, touching his hat graciously to the postmaster.

The postmaster bowed, said it had been his occasional good fortune to fall into the company of gentlemen like his Excellency, and that he had taken advantage of his opportunity to study their honours' manners, and adapt himself to them as far as he might. As for education, he could not boast much of that—his father being but in straitened circumstances, and the advantages small in his native country of New England: but he had done to the utmost of his power, and gathered what he could—he knew nothing like what they had in England.

Mr. Braddock burst out laughing, and said, "As for education, there were gentlemen of the army, by George, who didn't know whether they should spell bull with two b's or one. He had heard the Duke of Marlborough was no special good penman. He had not the honour of serving under that noble commander—his Grace was before his time—but he thrashed the French soundly, although he was no scholar."

Mr. Franklin said he was aware of both those facts.

"Nor is *my* Duke a scholar," went on Mr. Braddock—"aha, Mr. Postmaster, you have heard that, too—I see by the wink in your eye."

Mr. Franklin instantly withdrew the obnoxious or satirical wink in his eye, and looked into the General's jolly round face with a pair of orbs as innocent as a

baby's. "He's no scholar, but he is a match for any French general that ever swallowed the English for *fricassée de crapaud.* He saved the crown for the best of kings, his royal father, his Most Gracious Majesty King George."

Off went Mr. Franklin's hat, and from his large buckled wig escaped a great halo of powder.

"He is the soldier's best friend, and has been the uncompromising enemy of all beggarly red-shanked Scotch rebels and intriguing Romish Jesuits who would take our liberty from us, and our religion, by George. His royal highness, my gracious master, is not a scholar neither, but he is one of the finest gentlemen in the world."

"I have seen his royal highness on horseback, at a review of the Guards, in Hyde Park," says Mr. Franklin. "The Duke is indeed a very fine gentleman on horseback."

"You shall drink his health to-day, Postmaster. He is the best of masters, the best of friends, the best of sons to his royal old father; the best of gentlemen that ever wore an epaulet."

"Epaulets are quite out of my way, sir," says Mr. Franklin, laughing. "You know I live in a Quaker city."

"Of course they are out of your way, my good friend. Every man to his business. You, and gentlemen of your class, to your books, and welcome. We don't forbid you; we encourage you. We, to fight the enemy and govern the country. Hey, gentlemen? Lord! what roads you have in this colony, and how this confounded coach plunges! Who have we here, with the two negro boys in livery? He rides a good gelding."

"It is Mr. Washington," says the aide-de-camp.

"I would like him for a corporal of the Horse Grenadiers," said the General. "He has a good figure on a horse. He knows the country too, Mr. Franklin."

"Yes, indeed."

"And is a monstrous genteel young man, considering the opportunities he has had. I should have thought he had the polish of Europe, by George I should."

"He does his best," says Mr. Franklin, looking innocently at the stout chief, the exemplar of English elegance, who sat swagging from one side to the other of the carriage, his face as scarlet as his coat—swearing at every word; ignorant on every point off parade, except the merits of a bottle and the looks of a woman; not of high birth, yet absurdly proud of his no-ancestry; brave as a bull-dog; savage, lustful, prodigal, generous; gentle in soft moods; easy of love and laughter; dull of wit; utterly unread; believing his country the first in the world, and he as good a gentleman as any in it. "Yes, he is mighty well for a provincial, upon my word. He was beat at Fort What-d'ye-call-'um last year, down by the Thingamy River. What's the name on't, Talmadge?"

"The Lord knows, sir," says Talmadge; "and I dare say the Postmaster, too, who is laughing at us both."

"Oh, Captain!"

"Was caught in a regular trap. He had only militia and Indians with him. Good-day, Mr. Washington. A pretty nag, sir. That was your first affair, last year?"

"That at Fort Necessity? Yes, sir," said the gentleman, gravely saluting, as he rode up, followed by a couple of natty negro grooms, in smart livery coats and

velvet hunting-caps. "I began ill, sir, never having been in action until that unlucky day."

"You were all raw levies, my good fellow. You should have seen our militia run from the Scotch, and be cursed to them. You should have had some troops with you."

"Your Excellency knows 'tis my passionate desire to see and serve with them," said Mr. Washington.

"By George, we shall try and gratify you, sir," said the General, with one of his usual huge oaths; and on the heavy carriage rolled towards Castlewood; Mr. Washington asking leave to gallop on ahead, in order to announce his Excellency's speedy arrival to the lady there.

The progress of the Commander-in-Chief was so slow, that several humbler persons who were invited to meet his Excellency came up with his carriage, and, not liking to pass the great man on the road, formed quite a procession in the dusty wake of his chariot-wheels. First came Mr. Dinwiddie, the Lieutenant-Governor of his Majesty's province, attended by his negro-servants, and in company of Parson Broadbent, the jolly Williamsburg chaplain. These were presently joined by little Mr. Dempster, the young gentlemen's schoolmaster, in his great Ramillies wig, which he kept for occasions of state. Anon appeared Mr. Laws, the judge of the court, with Madam Laws on a pillion behind him, and their negro man carrying a box containing her ladyship's cap, and bestriding a mule. The procession looked so ludicrous, that Major Danvers and Mr. Franklin espying it, laughed outright, though not so loud as to disturb his Excellency, who was asleep by this time, and bade the whole of this queer rear-guard move on, and leave the Commander-in-Chief and his escort of dragoons to fol-

low at their leisure. There was room for all at Castlewood when they came. There was meat, drink, and the best tobacco for his Majesty's soldiers; and laughing and jollity for the negroes; and a plenteous welcome for their masters.

The honest General required to be helped to most dishes at the table, and more than once, and was for ever holding out his glass for drink; Nathan's sangaree he pronounced to be excellent, and had drunk largely of it on arriving before dinner. There was cider, ale, brandy, and plenty of good Bordeaux wine, some which Colonel Esmond himself had brought home with him to the colony, and which was fit for *ponteeficis cœnis,* said little Mr. Dempster, with a wink to Mr. Broadbent, the clergyman of the adjoining parish. Mr. Broadbent returned the wink and nod, and drank the wine without caring about the Latin, as why should he, never having hitherto troubled himself about the language? Mr. Broadbent was a gambling, guzzling, cock-fighting divine, who had passed much time in the Fleet prison, at Newmarket, at Hockley in the Hole; and having gone of all sorts of errands for his friend, Lord Cinqbars, Lord Ringwood's son, (my lady Cinqbars's waiting-woman being Mr. B.'s mother—I dare say the modern reader had best not be too particular regarding Mr. Broadbent's father's pedigree,) had been of late sent out to a church-living in Virginia. He and young Harry had fought many a match of cocks together, taken many a roe in company, hauled in countless quantities of shad and salmon, slain wild geese and wild swans, pigeons and plovers, and destroyed myriads of canvas-backed ducks. It was said by the envious that Broadbent was the midnight poacher on whom Mr. Washington set

his dogs, and whom he caned by the river-side at Mount Vernon. The fellow got away from his captor's grip, and scrambled to his boat in the dark; but Broadbent was laid up for two Sundays afterwards, and when he came abroad again, had the evident remains of a black eye, and a new collar to his coat. All the games at the cards had Harry Esmond and Parson Broadbent played together, besides hunting all the birds in the air, the beasts in the forest, and the fish of the sea. Indeed, when the boys rode together to get their reading with Mr. Dempster, I suspect that Harry stayed behind and took lessons from the other professor of European learning and accomplishments,—George going his own way, reading his own books, and, of course, telling no tales of his younger brother.

All the birds of the Virginia air, and all the fish of the sea in season were here laid on Madam Esmond's board to feed his Excellency and the rest of the English and American gentlemen. The gumbo was declared to be perfection (young Mr. Harry's black servant was named after this dish, being discovered behind the door with his head in a bowl of this delicious hotch-potch by the late Colonel, and grimly christened on the spot), the shad were rich and fresh, the stewed terrapins were worthy of London aldermen (before George, he would like the Duke himself to taste them, his Excellency deigned to say), and indeed, stewed terrapins are worthy of any duke or even emperor. The negro-women have a genius for cookery, and in Castlewood kitchens there were adepts in the art brought up under the keen eye of the late and the present Madam Esmond. Certain of the dishes, and especially the sweets and *flans,* Madam Esmond prepared herself with great neatness and dexter-

ity; carving several of the principal pieces, as the kindly cumbrous fashion of the day was, putting up the laced lappets of her sleeves, and showing the prettiest round arms and small hands and wrists as she performed this ancient rite of a hospitality not so languid as ours. The old law of the table was that the mistress was to press her guests with a decent eagerness, to watch and see whom she could encourage to farther enjoyment, to know culinary anatomic secrets, and execute carving operations upon fowls, fish, game, joints of meat, and so forth; to cheer her guests to fresh efforts, to whisper her neighbour, Mr. Braddock: "I have kept for your Excellency the jowl of this salmon.—I *will* take no denial! Mr. Franklin, you drink only water, sir, though our cellar has wholesome wine which gives no headaches. —Mr. Justice, you love woodcock pie?"

"Because I know who makes the pastry," says Mr. Laws, the Judge, with a profound bow. "I wish, Madam, we had such a happy knack of pastry at home as you have at Castlewood. I often say to my wife, 'My dear, I wish you had Madam Esmond's hand.'"

"It is a very pretty hand: I am sure others would like it too," says Mr. Postmaster of Boston, at which remark Mr. Esmond looks but half-pleased at the little gentleman.

"Such a hand for a light pie-crust," continues the Judge, "and my service to you, Madam." And he thinks the widow cannot but be propitiated by this compliment. She says simply that she had lessons when she was at home in England for her education, and that there were certain dishes which her mother taught her to make, and which her father and sons both liked. She was very glad if they pleased her company. More such remarks

follow: more dishes; ten times as much meat as is needful for the company. Mr. Washington does not embark in the general conversation much, but he and Mr. Talmadge, and Major Danvers, and the Postmaster, are deep in talk about roads, rivers, conveyances, sumpter-horses and artillery train; and the provincial militia Colonel has bits of bread laid at intervals on the table before him, and stations marked out, on which he has his finger, and regarding which he is talking to his brother aides-de-camp, till a negro-servant, changing the courses, brushes off the Potomac with a napkin, and sweeps up the Ohio in a spoon.

At the end of dinner, Mr. Broadbent leaves his place and walks up behind the Lieutenant-Governor's chair, where he says Grace, returning to his seat and resuming his knife and fork when this work of devotion is over. And now the sweets and puddings are come, of which I can give you a list, if you like; but what young lady cares for the puddings of to-day, much more for those which were eaten a hundred years ago, and which Madam Esmond had prepared for her guests with so much neatness and skill? Then, the table being cleared, Nathan, her chief-manager, lays a glass to every person, and fills his mistress's. Bowing to the company, she says she drinks but one toast, but knows how heartily all the gentlemen present will join her. Then she calls, "His Majesty," bowing to Mr. Braddock, who with his aides-de-camp and the colonial gentlemen all loyally repeat the name of their beloved and gracious Sovereign. And hereupon, having drunk her glass of wine and saluted all the company, the widow retires between a row of negro-servants, performing one of her very handsomest curtseys at the door.

The kind Mistress of Castlewood bore her part in the entertainment with admirable spirit, and looked so gay and handsome, and spoke with such cheerfulness and courage to all her company, that the few ladies who were present at the dinner, could not but congratulate Madam Esmond upon the elegance of the feast, and especially upon her manner of presiding at it. But they were scarcely got to her drawing-room, when her artificial courage failed her, and she burst into tears on the sofa by Mrs. Laws' side, just in the midst of a compliment from that lady. "Ah, Madam!" she said. "It may be an honour, as you say, to have the King's representative in my house, and our family has received greater personages than Mr. Braddock. But he comes to take one of my sons away from me. Who knows whether my boy will return, or how? I dreamed of him last night as wounded, and quite white, with blood streaming from his side. I would not be so ill-mannered as to let my grief be visible before the gentlemen; but, my good Mrs. Justice, who has parted with children, and who has a mother's heart of her own, would like me none the better, if mine were very easy this evening."

The ladies administered such consolations as seemed proper or palatable to their hostess, who tried not to give way farther to her melancholy, and remembered that she had other duties to perform, before yielding to her own sad mood. "It will be time enough, Madam, to be sorry when they are gone," she said to the Justice's wife, her good neighbour. "My boy must not see me following him with a wistful face, and have our parting made more dismal by my weakness. It is good that gentlemen of his rank and station should show themselves where their country calls them. That has always

been the way of the Esmonds, and the same Power which graciously preserved my dear father through twenty great battles in the Queen's time, I trust and pray, will watch over my son now his turn is come to do his duty." And, now, instead of lamenting her fate, or farther alluding to it, I dare say the resolute lady sat down with her female friends to a pool of cards and a dish of coffee, whilst the gentlemen remained in the neighbouring parlour, still calling their toasts and drinking their wine. When one lady objected that these latter were sitting rather long, Madam Esmond said: "It would improve and amuse the boys to be with the English gentlemen. Such society was very rarely to be had in their distant province, and though their conversation sometimes was free, she was sure that gentlemen and men of fashion would have regard to the youth of her sons, and say nothing before them which young people should not hear."

It was evident that the English gentlemen relished the good cheer provided for them. Whilst the ladies were yet at their cards, Nathan came in and whispered Mrs. Mountain, who at first cried out—"No; she would give no more—the common Bordeaux they might have, and welcome, if they still wanted more—but she would not give any more of the Colonel's." It appeared that the dozen bottles of particular claret had been already drunk up by the gentlemen, "besides ale, cider, Burgundy, Lisbon, and Madeira," says Mrs. Mountain, enumerating the supplies.

But Madam Esmond was for having no stint in the hospitality of the night. Mrs. Mountain was fain to bustle away with her keys to the sacred vault where the Colonel's particular Bordeaux lay, surviving its master,

who, too, had long passed underground. As they went on their journey, Mrs. Mountain asked whether any of the gentlemen had had too much? Nathan thought Mister Broadbent was tipsy—he always tipsy; he then thought the General gentleman was tipsy; and he thought Master George was a lilly drunk.

"Master George!" cries Mrs. Mountain: "why, he will sit for days without touching a drop."

Nevertheless, Nathan persisted in his notion that Master George was a lilly drunk. He was always filling his glass, he had talked, he had sung, he had cut jokes, especially against Mr. Washington, which made Mr. Washington quite red and angry, Nathan said. "Well, well!" Mrs. Mountain cried eagerly; "it was right a gentleman should make himself merry in good company, and pass the bottle along with his friends." And she trotted to the particular Bordeaux cellar with only the more alacrity.

The tone of freedom and almost impertinence which young George Esmond had adopted of late days towards Mr. Washington had very deeply vexed and annoyed that gentleman. There was scarce half-a-dozen years' difference of age between him and the Castlewood twins; but Mr. Washington had always been remarked for a discretion and sobriety much beyond his time of life, whilst the boys of Castlewood seemed younger than theirs. They had always been till now under their mother's anxious tutelage, and had looked up to their neighbour of Mount Vernon as their guide, director, friend—as, indeed, almost everybody seemed to do who came in contact with the simple and upright young man. Himself of the most scrupulous gravity and good-breeding, in his communication with other folks he appeared

to exact, or, at any rate, to occasion, the same behaviour. His nature was above levity and jokes: they seemed out of place when addressed to him. He was slow of comprehending them: and they slunk as it were abashed out of his society. "He always seemed great to me," says Harry Warrington, in one of his letters many years after the date of which we are writing; "and I never thought of him otherwise than as a hero. When he came over to Castlewood and taught us boys surveying, to see him riding to hounds, was as if he was charging an army. If he fired a shot, I thought the bird must come down, and if he flung a net, the largest fish in the river were sure to be in it. His words were always few, but they were always wise; they were not idle, as our words are; they were grave, sober, and strong, and ready on occasion to do their duty. In spite of his antipathy to him, my brother respected and admired the General as much as I did—that is to say, more than any mortal man."

Mr. Washington was the first to leave the jovial party which were doing so much honour to Madam Esmond's hospitality. Young George Esmond, who had taken his mother's place when she left it, had been free with the glass and with the tongue. He had said a score of things to his guest which wounded and chafed the latter, and to which Mr. Washington could give no reply. Angry beyond all endurance, he left the table at length, and walked away through the open windows into the broad veranda or porch which belonged to Castlewood as to all Virginian houses.

Here Madam Esmond caught sight of her friend's tall frame as it strode up and down before the windows; and, the evening being warm, or her game over, she gave up her cards to one of the other ladies, and joined her

good neighbour out of doors. He tried to compose his countenance as well as he could: it was impossible that he should explain to his hostess why and with whom he was angry.

"The gentlemen are long over their wine," she said; "gentlemen of the army are always fond of it."

"If drinking makes good soldiers, some yonder are distinguishing themselves greatly, Madam," said Mr. Washington.

"And I dare say the General is at the head of his troops?"

"No doubt, no doubt," answered the Colonel, who always received this lady's remarks, playful or serious, with a peculiar softness and kindness. "But the General is the General, and it is not for me to make remarks on his Excellency's doings at table or elsewhere. I think very likely that military gentlemen born and bred at home are different from us of the colonies. We have such a hot sun, that we need not wine to fire our blood as they do. And drinking toasts seems a point of honour with them. Talmadge hiccupped to me—I should say, whispered to me—just now, that an officer could no more refuse a toast than a challenge, and he said that it was after the greatest difficulty and dislike at first that he learned to drink. He has certainly overcome his difficulty with uncommon resolution."

"What, I wonder, can you talk of for so many hours?" asked the lady.

"I don't think I can tell you all we talk of, Madam, and I must not tell tales out of school. We talked about the war, and of the force Mr. Contrecœur has, and how we are to get at him. The General is for making the campaign in his coach, and makes light of it and the

enemy. That we shall beat them, if we meet them, I trust there is no doubt."

"How can there be?" says the lady, whose father had served under Marlborough.

"Mr. Franklin, though he is only from New England," continued the gentleman, "spoke great good sense, and would have spoken more if the English gentlemen would let him; but they reply invariably that we are only raw provincials, and don't know what disciplined British troops can do. Had they not best hasten forwards and make turnpike roads and have comfortable inns ready for his Excellency at the end of the day's march?—'There's some sort of inns, I suppose,' says Mr. Danvers, 'not so comfortable as we have in England, we can't expect that.'—'No, you can't expect that,' says Mr. Franklin, who seems a very shrewd and facetious person. He drinks his water, and seems to laugh at the Englishmen, though I doubt whether it is fair for a water-drinker to sit by and spy out the weaknesses of gentlemen over their wine."

"And my boys? I hope they are prudent?" said the widow, laying her hand on her guest's arm. "Harry promised me, and when he gives his word, I can trust him for anything. George is always moderate. Why do you look so grave?"

"Indeed, to be frank with you, I do not know what has come over George in these last days," says Mr. Washington. "He has some grievance against me which I do not understand, and of which I don't care to ask the reason. He spoke to me before the gentlemen in a way which scarcely became him. We are going the campaign together, and 'tis a pity we begin such ill friends."

"He has been ill. He is always wild and wayward, and hard to understand. But he has the most affectionate heart in the world. You will bear with him, you will protect him—promise me you will."

"Dear lady, I will do so with my life," Mr. Washington said with great fervour. "You know I would lay it down cheerfully for you or any you love."

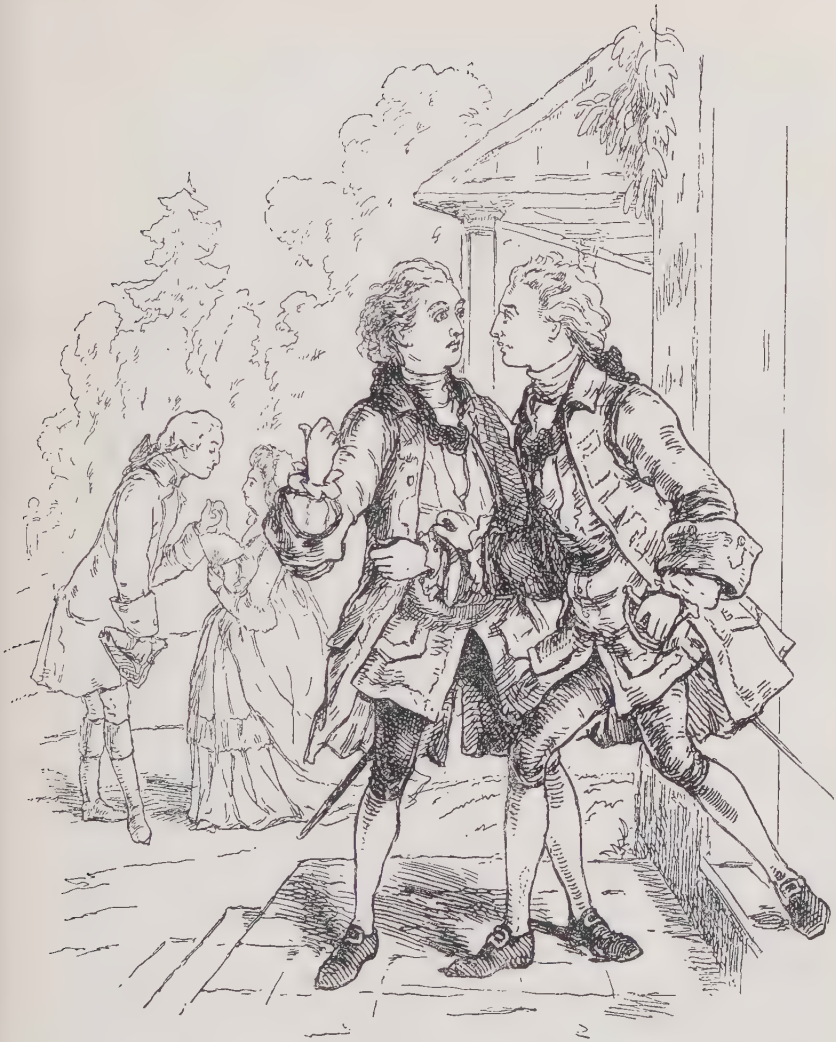
"And my father's blessing and mine go with you, dear friend!" cried the widow, full of thanks and affection.

As they pursued their conversation, they had quitted the porch under which they had first begun to talk, and where they could hear the laughter and toasts of the gentlemen over their wine, and were pacing a walk on the rough lawn before the house. Young George Warrington, from his place at the head of the table in the dining-room, could see the pair as they passed to and fro, and had listened for some time past, and replied in a very distracted manner to the remarks of the gentlemen round about him, who were too much engaged with their own talk and jokes, and drinking, to pay much attention to their young host's behaviour. Mr. Braddock loved a song after dinner, and Mr. Danvers his aide-de-camp, who had a fine tenor voice, was delighting his General with the latest ditty from Marybone Gardens, when George Warrington, jumping up, ran towards the window, and then returned and pulled his brother Harry by the sleeve, who sat with his back towards the window.

"What is it?" says Harry, who, for his part, was charmed too with the song and chorus.

"Come," cried George, with a stamp of his foot, and the younger followed obediently.

"What is it?" continued George, with a bitter oath. "Don't you see what it is? They were billing and cooing this morning; they are billing and cooing now before going to roost. Had we not better both go into the garden, and pay our duty to our mamma and papa?" and he pointed to Mr. Washington, who was taking the widow's hand very tenderly in his.



A Stepfather
in Prospect

CHAPTER X

A HOT AFTERNOON

GENERAL BRADDOCK and the other guests of Castlewood being duly consigned to their respective quarters, the boys retired to their own room, and there poured out to one another their opinions respecting the great event of the day. They would not bear such a marriage—no. Was the representative of the Marquises of Esmond to marry the younger son of a colonial family, who had been bred up as a land-surveyor? Castlewood, and the boys at nineteen years of age, handed over to the tender mercies of a step-father of three-and-twenty! Oh, it was monstrous! Harry was for going straightway to his mother in her bed-room—where her black maidens were divesting her ladyship of the simple jewels and fineries which she had assumed in compliment to the

feast—protesting against the odious match, and announcing that they would go home, live upon their little property there, and leave her for ever, if the unnatural union took place.

George advocated another way of stopping it, and explained his plan to his admiring brother. "Our mother," he said, "can't marry a man with whom one or both of us has been out on the field, and who has wounded us or killed us, or whom we have wounded or killed. We must have him out, Harry."

Harry saw the profound truth conveyed in George's statement, and admired his brother's immense sagacity. "No, George," says he, "you are right. Mother can't marry our murderer; she won't be as bad as that. And if we pink him, he is done for. '*Cadit quæstio*,' as Mr. Dempster used to say. Shall I send my boy with a challenge to Colonel George now?"

"My dear Harry," the elder replied, thinking with some complacency of his affair of honour at Quebec, "you are not accustomed to affairs of this sort."

"No," owned Harry, with a sigh, looking with envy and admiration on his senior.

"We can't insult a gentleman in our own house," continued George, with great majesty; "the laws of honour forbid such inhospitable treatment. But, sir, we can ride out with him, and, as soon as the park gates are closed, we can tell him our mind."

"That we can, by George!" cries Harry, grasping his brother's hand, "and that we will, too. I say, Georgy . . ." Here the lad's face became very red, and his brother asked him what he would say.

"This is *my* turn, brother," Harry pleaded. "If you go the campaign, I ought to have the other affair. In-

deed, indeed, I ought." And he prayed for this bit of promotion.

"Again the head of the house must take the lead, my dear," George said, with a superb air. "If I fall, my Harry will avenge me. But I must fight George Washington, Hal: and 'tis best I should; for, indeed, I hate him the worst. Was it not he who counselled my mother to order that wretch, Ward, to lay hands on me?"

"Ah, George," interposed the more placable younger brother, "you ought to forget and forgive!"

"Forgive? Never, sir, as long as I remember. You can't order remembrance out of a man's mind; and a wrong that was a wrong yesterday must be a wrong tomorrow. I never, of my knowledge, did one to any man, and I never will suffer one, if I can help it. I think very ill of Mr. Ward, but I don't think so badly of him as to suppose he will ever forgive thee that blow with the ruler. Colonel Washington is our enemy, mine especially. He has advised one wrong against me, and he meditates a greater. I tell you, brother, we must punish him."

The grandsire's old Bordeaux had set George's ordinarily pale countenance into a flame. Harry, his brother's fondest worshipper, could not but admire George's haughty bearing and rapid declamation, and prepared himself, with his usual docility, to follow his chief. So the boys went to their beds, the elder conveying special injunctions to his junior to be civil to all the guests so long as they remained under the maternal roof on the morrow.

Good manners and a repugnance to telling tales out of school, forbid us from saying which of Madam Esmond's guests was the first to fall under the weight of her hospitality. The respectable descendants of Messrs.

Talmadge and Danvers, aides-de-camp to his Excellency, might not care to hear how their ancestors were intoxicated a hundred years ago; and yet the gentlemen themselves took no shame in the fact, and there is little

doubt they or their comrades were tipsy twice or thrice in the week. Let us fancy them reeling to bed, supported by sympathizing negroes; and their vinous General, too stout a toper to have surrendered himself to a half-dozen bottles of Bordeaux, conducted to his chamber by the young gentlemen of the house, and speedily sleeping the sleep which friendly Bacchus gives. The good lady of Castlewood saw the condition of her guests

without the least surprise or horror; and was up early in the morning, providing cooling drinks for their hot palates, which the servants carried to their respective chambers. At breakfast, one of the English officers rallied Mr. Franklin, who took no wine at all, and therefore refused the morning cool draught of toddy, by showing how the Philadelphia gentleman lost two pleasures, the drink and the toddy. The young fellow said the disease was pleasant and the remedy delicious, and laughingly proposed to continue repeating them both. The General's new American aide-de-camp, Colonel Washington, was quite sober and serene. The British officers vowed they must take him in hand and teach him what the ways of the English army were; but the Virginian gentleman gravely said he did not care to learn that part of the English military education.

The widow, occupied as she had been with the cares of a great dinner, followed by a great breakfast on the morning ensuing, had scarce leisure to remark the behaviour of her sons very closely, but at least saw that George was scrupulously polite to her favourite, Colonel Washington, as to all the other guests of the house.

Before Mr. Braddock took his leave, he had a private audience of Madam Esmond, in which his Excellency formally offered to take her son into his family; and when the arrangements for George's departure were settled between his mother and future chief, Madam Esmond, though she might feel them, did not show any squeamish terrors about the dangers of the bottle, which she saw were amongst the severest and most certain which her son would have to face. She knew her boy must take his part in the world, and encounter his portion of evil and good. "Mr. Braddock is a perfect fine

gentleman in the morning," she said stoutly to her aide-de-camp, Mrs. Mountain; "and though my papa did not drink, 'tis certain that many of the best company in England do." The jolly General good-naturedly shook hands with George, who presented himself to his Excellency after the maternal interview was over, and bade George welcome, and to be in attendance at Frederick three days hence; shortly after which time the expedition would set forth.

And now the great coach was again called into requisition, the General's escort pranced round it, the other guests and their servants went to horse. The lady of Castlewood attended his Excellency to the steps of the veranda in front of her house, the young gentlemen followed, and stood on each side of his coach-door. The guard trumpeter blew a shrill blast, the negroes shouted, "Huzzay, and God sabe de King," as Mr. Braddock most graciously took leave of his hospitable entertainers, and rolled away on his road to headquarters.

As the boys went up the steps, there was the Colonel once more taking leave of their mother. No doubt she had been once more recommending George to his namesake's care; for Colonel Washington said: "With my life. You may depend on me," as the lads returned to their mother and the few guests still remaining in the porch. The Colonel was booted and ready to depart. "Farewell, my dear Harry," he said. "With you, George, 'tis no adieu. We shall meet in three days at the camp."

Both the young men were going to danger, perhaps to death. Colonel Washington was taking leave of her, and she was to see him no more before the campaign. No wonder the widow was very much moved.

George Warrington watched his mother's emotion and interpreted it with a pang of malignant scorn. "Stay yet a moment, and console our mamma," he said with a steady countenance, "only the time to get ourselves booted, and my brother and I will ride with you a little way, George." George Warrington had already ordered his horses. The three young men were speedily under way, their negro grooms behind them, and Mrs. Mountain, who knew she had made mischief between them and trembled for the result, felt a vast relief that Mr. Washington was gone without a quarrel with the brothers, without, at any rate, an open declaration of love to their mother.

No man could be more courteous in demeanour than George Warrington to his neighbour and namesake, the Colonel. The latter was pleased and surprised at his young friend's altered behaviour. The community of danger, the necessity of future fellowship, the softening influence of the long friendship which bound him to the Esmond family, the tender adieux which had just passed between him and the mistress of Castlewood, inclined the Colonel to forget the unpleasantness of the past days, and made him more than usually friendly with his young companion. George was quite gay and easy: it was Harry who was melancholy now: he rode silently and wistfully by his brother, keeping away from Colonel Washington, to whose side he used always to press eagerly before. If the honest Colonel remarked his young friend's conduct, no doubt he attributed it to Harry's known affection for his brother, and his natural anxiety to be with George now the day of their parting was so near.

They talked further about the war, and the probable

end of the campaign: none of the three doubted its successful termination. Two thousand veteran British troops with their commander must get the better of any force the French could bring against them, if only they moved in decent time. The ardent young Virginian soldier had an immense respect for the experienced valour and tactics of the regular troops. King George II. had no more loyal subject than Mr. Braddock's new aide-de-camp.

So the party rode amicably together, until they reached a certain rude log-house, called Benson's, of which the proprietor, according to the custom of the day and country, did not disdain to accept money from his guests in return for hospitalities provided. There was a recruiting station here, and some officers and men of Halkett's regiment assembled, and here Colonel Washington supposed that his young friends would take leave of him.

Whilst their horses were baited, they entered the public room, and found a rough meal prepared for such as were disposed to partake. George Warrington entered the place with a particularly gay and lively air, whereas poor Harry's face was quite white and wobegone.

"One would think, Squire Harry, 'twas you who was going to leave home and fight the French and Indians, and not Mr. George," says Benson.

"I may be alarmed about danger to my brother," said Harry, "though I might bear my own share pretty well. 'Tis not my fault that I stay at home."

"No, indeed, brother," cries George.

"Harry Warrington's courage does not need any proof!" cries Mr. Washington.

"You do the family honour by speaking so well of us, Colonel," says Mr. George, with a low bow. "I dare say we can hold our own, if need be."

Whilst his friend was vaunting his courage, Harry looked, to say the truth, by no means courageous. As his eyes met his brother's, he read in George's look an announcement which alarmed the fond faithful lad. "You are not going to do it now?" he whispered his brother.

"Yes, now," says Mr. George, very steadily.

"For God's sake let me have the turn. You are going on the campaign, you ought not to have everything—and there may be an explanation, George. We may be all wrong."

"Psha, how can we? It must be done now—don't be alarmed. No names shall be mentioned—I shall easily find a subject."

A couple of Halkett's officers, whom our young gentlemen knew, were sitting under the porch, with the Virginian toddy-bowl before them.

"What are you conspiring, gentlemen?" cried one of them. "Is it a drink?"

By the tone of their voices and their flushed cheeks, it was clear the gentlemen had already been engaged in drinking that morning.

"The very thing, sir," George said gaily. "Fresh glasses, Mr. Benson! What, no glasses? Then we must have at the bowl."

"Many a good man has drunk from it," says Mr. Benson; and the lads, one after another, and bowing first to their military acquaintance, touched the bowl with their lips. The liquor did not seem to be much diminished for the boys' drinking, though George especially

gave himself a toper's airs, and protested it was delicious after their ride. He called out to Colonel Washington, who was at the porch, to join his friends, and drink.

The lad's tone was offensive, and resembled the manner lately adopted by him, and which had so much chafed Mr. Washington. He bowed, and said he was not thirsty.

"Nay, the liquor is paid for," says George; "never fear, Colonel."

"I said I was not thirsty. I did not say the liquor was not paid for," said the young Colonel, drumming with his foot.

"When the King's health is proposed, an officer can hardly say no. I drink the health of his Majesty, gentlemen," cried George. "Colonel Washington can drink it or leave it. The King!"

This was a point of military honour. The two British officers of Halkett's, Captain Grace and Mr. Waring, both drank "The King." Harry Warrington drank "The King." Colonel Washington, with glaring eyes, gulped, too, a slight draught from the bowl.

Then Captain Grace proposed "The Duke and the Army," which toast there was likewise no gainsaying. Colonel Washington had to swallow "The Duke and the Army."

"You don't seem to stomach the toast, Colonel," said George.

"I tell you again, I don't want to drink," replied the Colonel. "It seems to me the Duke and the Army would be served all the better if their healths were not drunk so often."

"You are not up to the ways of regular troops as yet," said Captain Grace, with rather a thick voice.

"Maybe not, sir."

"A British officer," continues Captain Grace, with great energy but doubtful articulation, "never neglects a toast of that sort, nor any other duty. A man who refuses to drink the health of the Duke—hang me, such a man should be tried by a court-martial!"

"What means this language to me? You are drunk, sir!" roared Colonel Washington, jumping up, and striking the table with his fist.

"A cursed provincial officer say I'm drunk!" shrieks out Captain Grace. "Waring, do you hear that?"

"*I* heard it, sir!" cried George Warrington. "We all heard it. He entered at my invitation—the liquor called for was mine: the table was mine—and I am shocked to hear such monstrous language used at it as Colonel Washington has just employed towards my esteemed guest, Captain Waring."

"Confound your impudence, you infernal young jackanapes!" bellowed out Colonel Washington. "*You* dare to insult me before British officers, and find fault with my language? For months past, I have borne with such impudence from you, that if I had not loved your mother—yes, sir, and your good grandfather and your brother—I would—I would—" Here his words failed him, and the irate Colonel, with glaring eyes and purple face, and every limb quivering with wrath, stood for a moment speechless before his young enemy.

"You would what, sir?" says George, very quietly, "if you did not love my grandfather, and my brother, and my mother? You are making her petticoat a plea for some conduct of yours—you would do what, sir, may I ask again?"

"I would put you across my knee and whip you, you

snarling little puppy, that's what I would do!" cried the Colonel, who had found breath by this time, and vented another explosion of fury.

"Because you have known us all our lives, and made our house your own, that is no reason you should insult either of us!" here cried Harry, starting up. "What you have said, George Washington, is an insult to me and my brother alike. You will ask our pardon, sir!"

"Pardon!"

"Or give us the reparation that is due to gentlemen," continues Harry.

The stout Colonel's heart smote him to think that he should be at mortal quarrel or called upon to shed the blood of one of the lads he loved. As Harry stood facing him, with his fair hair, flushing cheeks, and quivering voice, an immense tenderness and kindness filled the bosom of the elder man. "I—I am bewildered," he said. "My words, perhaps, were very hasty. What has been the meaning of George's behaviour to me for months back? Only tell me, and, perhaps—"

The evil spirit was awake and victorious in young George Warrington: his black eyes shot out scorn and hatred at the simple and guileless gentleman before him. "You are shirking from the question, sir, as you did from the toast just now," he said. "I am not a boy to suffer under your arrogance. You have publicly insulted me in a public place, and I demand a reparation."

"In heaven's name, be it!" says Mr. Washington, with the deepest grief in his face.

"And you have insulted *me,*" continues Captain Grace, reeling towards him. "What was it he said? Confound the militia captain—colonel, what is he? You've insulted me! Oh, Waring! to think I should be

insulted by a captain of militia!" And tears bedewed the noble Captain's cheek as this harrowing thought crossed his mind.

"I insult *you,* you hog!" the Colonel again yelled out, for he was little affected by humour, and had no disposition to laugh as the others had at the scene. And, behold, at this minute a fourth adversary was upon him.

"Great Powers, sir!" said Captain Waring, "are three affairs not enough for you, and must I come into the quarrel, too? You have a quarrel with these two young gentlemen."

"Hasty words, sir!" cries poor Harry once more.

"Hasty words, sir!" cries Captain Waring. "A gentleman tells another gentleman that he will put him across his knees and whip him, and you call those hasty words? Let me tell you if any man were to say to me, 'Charles Waring,' or 'Captain Waring, I'll put you across my knees and whip you,' I'd say, 'I'll drive my cheese-toaster through his body,' if he were as big as Goliath, I would. That's one affair with young Mr. George Warrington. Mr. Harry, of course, as a young man of spirit, will stand by his brother. That's two. Between Grace and the Colonel apology is impossible. And, now—run me through the body!—you call an officer of my regiment—of Halkett's, sir!—a hog before my face! Great Heavens, sir! Mr. Washington! are you all like this in Virginia? Excuse me, I would use no offensive personality, as, by George! I will suffer none from any man! but, by gad, Colonel! give me leave to tell you that you are the most quarrelsome man I ever saw in my life. Call a disabled officer of my regiment—for he is disabled, ain't you, Grace?—call him

a hog before *me!* You withdraw it, sir—you withdraw it?"

"Is this some infernal conspiracy in which you are all leagued against me?" shouted the Colonel. "It would seem as if I was drunk, and not you, as you all are. I withdraw nothing. I apologize for nothing. By heavens! I will meet one or half-a-dozen of you in your turn, young or old, drunk or sober."

"I do not wish to hear myself called more names," cried Mr. George Warrington. "This affair can proceed, sir, without any further insult on your part. When will it please you to give me the meeting?"

"The sooner the better, sir!" said the Colonel, fuming with rage.

"The sooner the better," hiccupped Captain Grace, with many oaths needless to print—(in those days, oaths were the customary garnish of all gentlemen's conversation)—and he rose staggering from his seat, and reeled towards his sword, which he had laid by the door, and fell as he reached the weapon. "The sooner the better!" the poor tipsy wretch again cried out from the ground, waving his weapon and knocking his own hat over his eyes.

"At any rate, *this* gentleman's business will keep cool till to-morrow," the Militia Colonel said, turning to the other King's officer. "You will hardly bring your man out to-day, Captain Waring?"

"I confess that neither his hand nor mine are particularly steady."

"Mine is!" cried Mr. Warrington, glaring at his enemy.

His comrade of former days was as hot and as savage. "Be it so—with what weapon, sir?" Washington said sternly.

"Not with small swords, Colonel. We can beat you with them. You know that from our old bouts. Pistols had better be the word."

"As you please, George Warrington—and God forgive you, George! God pardon you, Harry! for bringing me into this quarrel," said the Colonel, with a face full of sadness and gloom.

Harry hung his head, but George continued with perfect calmness: "I, sir? It was not I who called names, who talked of a cane, who insulted a gentleman in a public place before gentlemen of the army. It is not the first time you have chosen to take me for a negro, and talked of the whip for me."

The Colonel started back, turning very red, and as if struck by a sudden remembrance.

"Great heavens, George! is it that boyish quarrel you are still recalling?"

"Who made you the overseer of Castlewood?" said the boy, grinding his teeth. "I am not your slave, George Washington, and I never will be. I hated you then, and I hate you now. And you have insulted me, and I am a gentleman, and so are you. Is that not enough?"

"Too much, only too much," said the Colonel, with a genuine grief on his face, and at his heart. "Do you bear malice too, Harry? I had not thought this of thee!"

"I stand by my brother," said Harry, turning away from the Colonel's look, and grasping George's hand. The sadness on their adversary's face did not depart. "Heaven be good to us! 'Tis all clear now," he muttered to himself. "The time to write a few letters, and I am at your service, Mr. Warrington," he said.

"You have your own pistols at your saddle. I did not ride out with any; but will send Sady back for mine. That will give you time enough, Colonel Washington?"

"Plenty of time, sir." And each gentleman made the other a low bow, and, putting his arm in his brother's, George walked away. The Virginian officer looked towards the two unlucky captains, who were by this time helpless with liquor. Captain Benson, the master of the tavern, was propping the hat of one of them over his head.

"It is not altogether their fault, Colonel," said my landlord, with a grim look of humour. "Jack Firebrace and Tom Humbold of Spotsylvania was here this morning, chanting horses with 'em. And Jack and Tom got 'em to play cards; and they didn't win—the British Captains didn't. And Jack and Tom challenged them to drink for the honour of Old England, and they didn't win at that game neither, much. They are kind, free-handed fellows when they are sober, but they are a pretty pair of fools—they are."

"Captain Benson, you are an old frontier man, and an officer of ours, before you turned farmer and taverner. You will help me in this matter with yonder young gentlemen?" said the Colonel.

"I'll stand by and see fair play, Colonel. I won't have no hand in it, beyond seeing fair play. Madam Esmond has helped me many a time, tended my poor wife in her lying-in, and doctored our Betty in the fever. You ain't a goin' to be very hard with them poor boys? Though I seen 'em both shoot: the fair one hunts well, as you know, but the old one's a wonder at an ace of spades."

"Will you be pleased to send my man with my valise,

Captain, into any private room which you can spare me? I must write a few letters before this business comes on. God grant it were well over!" And the Captain led the Colonel into almost the only other room of his house, calling, with many oaths, to a pack of negro servants to disperse thence, who were chattering loudly among one another, and no doubt discussing the quarrel which had just taken place. Edwin, the Colonel's man, returned with his master's portmanteau, and, as he looked from the window, he saw Sady, George Warrington's negro, galloping away upon his errand, doubtless, and in the direction of Castlewood. The Colonel, young and naturally hot-headed, but the most courteous and scrupulous of men, and ever keeping his strong passions under guard, could not but think with amazement of the position in which he found himself, and of the three, perhaps four enemies, who appeared suddenly before him, menacing his life. How had this strange series of quarrels been brought about? He had ridden away a few hours since from Castlewood, with his young companions, and to all seeming they were perfect friends. A shower of rain sends them into a tavern, where there are a couple of recruiting officers, and they are not seated for half an hour, at a social table, but he has quarrelled with the whole company, called this one names, agreed to meet another in combat, and threatened chastisement to a third, the son of his most intimate friend!

CHAPTER XI

WHEREIN THE TWO GEORGES PREPARE FOR BLOOD

THE Virginian Colonel remained in one chamber of the tavern, occupied with gloomy preparations for the ensuing meeting: his adversary in the other room thought fit to make his testamentary dispositions, too, and dictated, by his obedient brother and secretary, a grandiloquent letter to his mother, of whom, and by that writing, he took a solemn farewell. She would hardly, he supposed, pursue *the scheme which she had in view* (a peculiar satirical emphasis was laid upon the scheme which she had in view), after the event of that morning, should he fall, as, probably, would be the case.

"My dear, dear George, don't say that!" cried the affrighted secretary.

"As probably will be the case," George persisted with great majesty. "You know what a good shot Colonel George is, Harry. I, myself, am pretty fair at a mark, and 'tis probable that one or both of us will drop.—'I scarcely suppose you will carry out the intentions you

George's Secretary
at War

have at present in view.' " This was uttered in a tone of still greater bitterness than George had used even in the previous phrase. Harry wept as he took it down.

" You see I say nothing; Madam Esmond's name does not even appear in the quarrel. Do you not remember, in our grandfather's life of himself, how he says that Lord Castlewood fought Lord Mohun on a pretext of a quarrel at cards? and never so much as hinted at the lady's name, who was the real cause of the duel? I took my hint, I confess, from *that,* Harry. Our mother is not compromised in the— Why, child, what have you been writing, and who taught thee to spell?" Harry had written the last words " in view," in *vew,* and a great blot of salt water from his honest, boyish eyes may have obliterated some other bad spelling.

" I can't think about the spelling now, Georgy," whimpered George's clerk. " I'm too miserable for that. I begin to think, perhaps, it's all nonsense, perhaps Colonel George never—"

" Never meant to take possession of Castlewood; never gave himself airs, and patronized us there; never advised my mother to have me flogged, never intended to marry her; never insulted me, and was insulted before the King's officers; never wrote to his brother to say we should be the better for his parental authority? The paper is there," cried the young man, slapping his breast-pocket, " and if anything happens to me, Harry Warrington, you will find it on my corse!"

" Write yourself, Georgy, I *can't* write," says Harry, digging his fists into his eyes, and smearing over the whole composition, bad spelling and all, with his elbows.

On this, George, taking another sheet of paper, sat down at his brother's place, and produced a composition

in which he introduced the longest words, the grandest Latin quotations, and the most profound satire of which the youthful scribe was master. He desired that his negro boy, Sady, should be set free; that his "Horace," a choice of his books, and, if possible, a suitable provision should be made for his affectionate tutor, Mr. Dempster; that his silver fruit-knife, his music-books, and harpsichord, should be given to little Fanny Mountain; and that his brother should take a lock of his hair, and wear it in memory of his ever fond and faithfully attached George. And he sealed the document with the seal of arms that his grandfather had worn.

"The watch, of course, will be yours," said George, taking out his grandfather's gold watch, and looking at it. "Why, two hours and a half are gone! 'Tis time that Sady should be back with the pistols. Take the watch, Harry dear."

"It's no good!" cried out Harry, flinging his arms round his brother. "If he fights you, I'll fight him, too. If he kills my Georgy, —— him, he shall have a shot at me!" and the poor lad uttered more than one of those expressions, which are said peculiarly to affect recording angels, who have to take them down at celestial chanceries.

Meanwhile, General Braddock's new aide-de-camp had written five letters in his large resolute hand, and sealed them with his seal. One was to his mother, at Mount Vernon; one to his brother; one was addressed M. C. only; and one to his Excellency, Major-General Braddock. "And one, young gentlemen, is for your mother, Madam Esmond," said the boys' informant.

Again the recording angel had to fly off with a violent expression, which parted from the lips of George War-

rington. The chancery previously mentioned was crowded with such cases, and the messengers must have been for ever on the wing. But I fear for young George and his oath there was no excuse; for it was an execration uttered from a heart full of hatred, and rage, and jealousy.

It was the landlord of the tavern who communicated these facts to the young men. The Captain had put on his old militia uniform to do honour to the occasion, and informed the boys that the "Colonel was walking up and down the garden a waiting for 'em, and that the Reg'lars was a'most sober, too, by this time."

A plot of ground near the Captain's log-house had been enclosed with shingles, and cleared for a kitchen-garden; there indeed paced Colonel Washington, his hands behind his back, his head bowed down, a grave sorrow on his handsome face. The negro servants were crowded at the palings, and looking over. The officers under the porch had wakened up also, as their host remarked. Captain Waring was walking, almost steadily, under the balcony formed by the sloping porch and roof of the wooden house; and Captain Grace was lolling over the railing, with eyes which stared very much, though perhaps they did not see very clearly. Benson's was a famous rendezvous for cock-fights, horse-matches, boxing, and wrestling-matches, such as brought the Virginian country-folks together. There had been many brawls at Benson's, and men who came thither sound and sober had gone thence with ribs broken and eyes gouged out. And squires, and farmers, and negroes, all participated in the sport.

There, then, stalked the tall young Colonel, plunged in dismal meditation. There was no way out of his

scrape, but the usual cruel one, which the laws of honour and the practice of the country ordered. Goaded into fury by the impertinence of a boy, he had used insulting words. The young man had asked for reparation. He was shocked to think that George Warrington's jealousy and revenge should have rankled in the young fellow so long: but the wrong had been the Colonel's, and he was bound to pay the forfeit.

A great hallooing and shouting, such as negroes use, who love noise at all times, and especially delight to yell and scream when galloping on horseback, was now heard at a distance, and all the heads, woolly and powdered, were turned in the direction of this outcry. It came from the road over which our travellers had themselves passed three hours before, and presently the clattering of a horse's hoofs was heard, and now Mr. Sady made his appearance on his foaming horse, and actually fired a pistol off in the midst of a prodigious uproar from his woolly brethren; then he fired another pistol off: to which noise Sady's horse, which had carried Harry Warrington on many a hunt, was perfectly accustomed. And now he was in the court-yard, surrounded by a score of his bawling comrades, and was descending amidst fluttering fowls and turkeys, kicking horses and shrieking frantic pigs; and brother negroes crowded round him, to whom he instantly began to talk and chatter.

"Sady, sir, come here!" roars out Master Harry.

"Sady, come here, confound you!" shouts Master George. (Again the recording angel is in requisition, and has to be off on one of his endless errands to the register office.) "Come directly, Mas'r," says Sady, and resumes his conversation with his woolly brethren. He grins. He takes the pistols out of the holster. He snaps

the locks. He points them at a grunter, which plunges through the farm-yard. He points down the road, over which he has just galloped, and towards which the woolly heads again turn. He says again, "Comin', Mas'r. Everybody a-comin'." And now, the gallop of other horses is heard. And who is yonder? Little Mr. Dempster, spurring and digging into his pony; and that lady in a riding-habit on Madam Esmond's little horse—can it be Madam Esmond? No. It is too stout. As I live it is Mrs. Mountain on Madam's grey!

"O Lor'! O Golly! Hoop! Here dey come! Hurray!" A chorus of negroes rises up. "Here dey are!" Dr. Dempster and Mrs. Mountain have clattered into the yard, have jumped from their horses, have elbowed through the negroes, have rushed into the house, have run through it and across the porch, where the British officers are sitting in muzzy astonishment; have run down the stairs to the garden where George and Harry are walking, their tall enemy stalking opposite to them; and almost ere George Warrington has had time sternly to say, "What do you do here, Madam?" Mrs. Mountain has flung her arms round his neck and cries: "Oh, George, my darling! It's a mistake! It's a mistake, and is all my fault!"

"What's a mistake?" asks George, majestically separating himself from the embrace.

"What is it, Mounty?" cries Harry, all of a tremble.

"That paper I took out of his portfolio, that paper I picked up, children; where the Colonel says he is going to marry a widow with two children. Who should it be but you, children, and who should it be but your mother?"

"Well?"

"Well, it's—it's not your mother. It's that little widow Curtis whom the Colonel is going to marry. He'd always take a rich one; I knew he would. It's not Mrs. Rachel Warrington. He told Madam so to-day, just before he was going away, and that the marriage was to come off after the campaign. And—and your mother is furious, boys. And when Sady came for the pistols, and told the whole house how you were going to fight, I told him to fire the pistols off; and I galloped after him, and I've nearly broken my poor old bones in coming to you."

"I have a mind to break Mr. Sady's," growled George. "I specially enjoined the villain not to say a word."

"Thank God he did, brother," said poor Harry. "Thank God he did!"

"What will Mr. Washington and those gentlemen think of my servant telling my mother at home that I was going to fight a duel?" asks Mr. George, still in wrath.

"You have shown your proofs before, George," says Harry, respectfully. "And, thank heaven, you are not going to fight our old friend—our grandfather's old friend. For it was a mistake: and there is no quarrel now, dear, is there? You were unkind to him under a wrong impression."

"I certainly acted under a wrong impression," owns George, "but—"

"George! George Washington!" Harry here cries out, springing over the cabbage-garden towards the bowling-green, where the Colonel was stalking, and though we cannot hear him, we see him, with both his hands out, and with the eagerness of youth, and with a hundred blunders, and with love and affection thrill-

ing in his honest voice, we imagine the lad telling his tale to his friend.

There was a custom in those days which has disappeared from our manners now, but which then lingered. When Harry had finished his artless story, his friend the Colonel took him fairly to his arms, and held him to his heart: and his voice faltered as he said, "Thank God, thank God for this!"

"Oh, George," said Harry, who felt now how he loved his friend with all his heart, "how I wish I was going with you on the campaign!" The other pressed both the boy's hands, in a grasp of friendship, which, each knew, never would slacken.

Then the Colonel advanced, gravely holding out his hand to Harry's eldest brother. Perhaps Harry wondered that the two did not embrace as he and the Colonel had just done. But, though hands were joined, the salutation was only formal and stern on both sides.

"I find I have done you a wrong, Colonel Washington," George said, "and must apologize, not for the error, but for much of my late behaviour which has resulted from it."

"The error was mine! It was I who found that paper in your room, and showed it to George, and was jealous of you, Colonel. All women are jealous," cried Mrs. Mountain.

"'Tis a pity you could not have kept your eyes off my paper, Madam," said Mr. Washington. "You will permit me to say so. A great deal of mischief has come because I chose to keep a secret which concerned only myself and another person. For a long time George Warrington's heart has been black with anger against me, and my feeling towards him has, I own, scarce been

more friendly. All this pain might have been spared to both of us, had my private papers only been read by those for whom they were written. I shall say no more now, lest my feelings again should betray me into hasty words. Heaven bless thee, Harry! Farewell, George! And take a true friend's advice, and try and be less ready to think evil of your friends. We shall meet again at the camp, and will keep our weapons for the enemy. Gentlemen! if you remember this scene to-morrow, you will know where to find me." And with a very stately bow to the English officers, the Colonel left the abashed company, and speedily rode away.

CHAPTER XII

NEWS FROM THE CAMP

E must fancy that the parting between the brothers is over, that George has taken his place in Mr. Braddock's family, and Harry has returned home to Castlewood and his duty. His heart is with the army, and his pursuits at home offer the boy no pleasure. He does not care to own how deep his disappointment is, at being obliged to stay under the homely, quiet roof, now more melancholy than ever since George is away. Harry passes his brother's empty chamber with an averted face; takes George's place at the head of the table, and sighs as he drinks from his silver tankard. Madam Warrington calls the toast of "The King" stoutly every day; and on Sundays, when Harry reads the Service, and prays for all travellers by land and by water, she says, "We beseech

Thee to hear us," with a peculiar solemnity. She insists on talking about George constantly, but quite cheerfully, and as if his return was certain. She walks into his vacant room, with head upright, and no outward signs of emotion. She sees that his books, linen, papers, &c., are arranged with care; talking of him with a very special respect, and specially appealing to the old servants at meals, and so forth, regarding things which are to be done "when Mr. George comes home." Mrs. Mountain is constantly on the whimper when George's name is mentioned, and Harry's face wears a look of the most ghastly alarm; but his mother's is invariably grave and sedate. She makes more blunders at picquet and backgammon than you would expect from her; and the servants find her awake and dressed, however early they may rise. She has prayed Mr. Dempster to come back into residence at Castlewood. She is not severe or haughty (as her wont certainly was) with any of the party, but quiet in her talk with them, and gentle in assertion and reply. She is for ever talking of her father and his campaigns, who came out of them all with no very severe wounds to hurt him; and so she hopes and trusts will her eldest son.

George writes frequent letters home to his brother, and, now the army is on its march, compiles a rough journal, which he forwards as occasion serves. This document is perused with great delight and eagerness by the youth to whom it is addressed, and more than once read out in family council, on the long summer nights, as Madam Esmond sits upright at her tea-table — (she never condescends to use the back of a chair) — as little Fanny Mountain is busy with her sewing, as Mr. Dempster and Mrs. Mountain sit over their cards,

as the hushed old servants of the house move about silently in the gloaming, and listen to the words of the young master. Hearken to Harry Warrington reading out his brother's letter! As we look at the slim characters on the yellow page, fondly kept and put aside, we can almost fancy him alive who wrote and who read it—and yet, lo! they are as if they never had been; their portraits faint images in frames of tarnished gold. Were they real once, or are they mere phantasms? Did they live and die once? Did they love each other as true brothers, and loyal gentlemen? Can we hear their voices in the past? Sure I know Harry's, and yonder he sits in the warm summer evening, and reads his young brother's simple story:—

"It must be owned that the provinces are acting scurvily by his Majesty King George II., and his representative here is in a flame of fury. Virginia is bad enough, and poor Maryland not much better, but Pennsylvania is worst of all. We pray them to send us troops from home to fight the French; and we promise to maintain the troops when they come. We not only don't keep our promise, and make scarce any provision for our defenders, but our people insist upon the most exorbitant prices for their cattle and stores, and actually cheat the soldiers who are come to fight their battles. No wonder the General swears, and the troops are sulky. The delays have been endless. Owing to the failure of the several provinces to provide their promised stores and means of locomotion, weeks and months have elapsed, during which time, no doubt, the French have been strengthening themselves on our frontier and in the forts they have turned us out of. Though there never will be any love lost between me and Colonel Washing-

ton, it must be owned that *your favourite* (I am not jealous, Hal,) is a brave man and a good officer. The family respect him very much, and the General is always asking his opinion. Indeed, he is almost the only man who has seen the Indians in their war-paint, and I own I think he was right in firing upon Mons. Jumonville last year.

"There is to be no more *suite* to that other quarrel at Benson's Tavern than there was to the proposed battle between Colonel W. and a certain young gentleman who shall be nameless. Captain Waring wished to pursue it on coming into camp, and brought the message from Captain Grace, which your friend, who is as bold as Hector, was for taking up, and employed a brother aide-de-camp, Colonel Wingfield, on his side. But when Wingfield heard the circumstances of the quarrel, how it had arisen from Grace being drunk, and was fomented by Waring being tipsy, and how the two 44th gentlemen had chosen to insult a militia officer, he swore that Colonel Washington should not meet the 44th men; that he would carry the matter straightway to his Excellency, who would bring the two captains to a court-martial for brawling with the militia, and drunkenness, and indecent behaviour, and the captains were fain to put up their toasting-irons, and swallow their wrath. They were good-natured enough out of their cups, and ate their humble pie with very good appetites at a reconciliation dinner which Colonel W. had with the 44th, and where he was as perfectly stupid and correct as Prince Prettyman need be. Hang him! He has no faults, and that's why I dislike him. When he marries that widow—ah me! what a dreary life she will have of it."

"I wonder at the taste of some men, and the effrontery of some women," says Madam Esmond, laying her

teacup down. "I wonder at *any* woman who has been married once, so forgetting herself as to marry again! Don't you, Mountain?"

"Monstrous!" says Mountain, with a queer look.

Dempster keeps his eyes steadily fixed on his glass of punch. Harry looks as if he was choking with laughter, or with some other concealed emotion, but his mother says, "Go on, Harry! Continue with your brother's journal. He writes well: but, ah, will he ever be able to write like my papa?"

Harry resumes: "We keep the strictest order here in camp, and the orders against drunkenness and ill behaviour on the part of the men are very severe. The roll of each company is called at morning, noon, and night, and a return of the absent and disorderly is given in by the officer to the commanding officer of the regiment, who has to see that they are properly punished. The *men* are punished, and the drummers are always at work. Oh, Harry, but it made one sick to see the first blood drawn from a great strong white back, and to hear the piteous yell of the poor fellow."

"Oh, horrid!" says Madam Esmond.

"I think I should have murdered Ward if he had flogged me. Thank heaven he got off with only a crack of the ruler! The *men,* I say, are looked after carefully enough. I wish the officers were. The Indians have just broken up their camp, and retired in dudgeon, because the young officers were for ever drinking with the squaws—and—and—hum—ha." Here Mr. Harry pauses, as not caring to proceed with the narrative, in the presence of little Fanny, very likely, who sits primly in her chair by her mother's side, working her little sampler.

"Pass over that about the odious tipsy creatures," says

Madam. And Harry commences, in a loud tone, a much more satisfactory statement: "Each regiment has Divine Service performed at the head of its colours every Sunday. The General does everything in the power of mortal man to prevent plundering, and to encourage the people round about to bring in provisions. He has declared soldiers shall be shot who dare to interrupt or molest the market people. He has ordered the price of provisions to be raised a penny a pound, and has lent money out of his own pocket to provide the camp. Altogether, he is a strange compound, this General. He flogs his men without mercy, but he gives without stint. He swears most tremendous oaths in conversation, and tells stories which Mountain would be shocked to hear—"

"Why *me?*" asks Mountain; "and what have I to do with the General's silly stories?"

"Never mind the stories; and go on, Harry," cries the mistress of the house.

"—would be shocked to hear after dinner; but he never misses service. He adores his Great Duke, and has his name constantly on his lips. Our two regiments both served in Scotland, where I dare say Mr. Dempster knew the colour of their facings."

"We saw the tails of their coats, as well as their facings," growls the little Jacobite tutor.

"Colonel Washington has had the fever very smartly, and has hardly been well enough to keep up with the march. Had he not better go home and be nursed by his widow? When either of us is ill, we are almost as good friends again as ever. But I feel somehow as if I can't forgive him for having wronged him. Good Powers! How I have been hating him for these months past! Oh, Harry! I was in a fury at the tavern the other day.

because Mountain came up so soon, and put an end to our difference. We ought to have burned a little gunpowder between us, and cleared the air. But though I don't love him as you do, I know he is a good soldier, a good officer, and a brave, honest man; and, at any rate, shall love him none the worse for not wanting to be our step-father."

"A step-father, indeed!" cries Harry's mother. "Why, jealousy and prejudice have perfectly maddened the poor child! Do you suppose the Marquis of Esmond's daughter and heiress could not have found other step-fathers for her sons than a mere provincial surveyor? If there are any more such allusions in George's journal, I beg you skip 'em, Harry, my dear. About this piece of folly and blundering, there hath been quite talk enough already."

"'Tis a pretty sight," Harry continued, reading from his brother's journal, "to see a long line of red-coats, threading through the woods or taking their ground after the march. The care against surprise is so great and constant, that we defy prowling Indians to come unawares upon us, and our advanced sentries and savages have on the contrary fallen in with the enemy and taken a scalp or two from them. They are such cruel villains, these French and their painted allies, that we do not think of showing them mercy. Only think, we found but yesterday a little boy scalped but yet alive in a lone house, where his parents had been attacked and murdered by the savage enemy, of whom—so great is his indignation at their cruelty—our General has offered a reward of 5*l.* for all the Indian scalps brought in.

"When our march is over, you should see our camp, and all the care bestowed on it. Our baggage and our

General's tents and guard are placed quite in the centre of the camp. We have outlying sentries by twos, by threes, by tens, by whole companies. At the least surprise, they are instructed to run in on the main body and rally round the tents and baggage, which are so arranged themselves as to be a strong fortification. Sady and I, you must know, are marching on foot now, and my horses are carrying baggage. The Pennsylvanians sent such rascally animals into camp that they speedily gave in. What good horses were left 'twas our duty to give up: and Roxana has a couple of packs upon her back instead of her young master. She knows me right well, and whinnies when she sees me, and I walk by her side, and we have many a talk together on the march.

"July 4. To guard against surprises, we are all warned to pay especial attention tc the beat of the drum; always halting when we hear the long roll beat, and marching at the beat of the long march. We are more on the alert regarding the enemy now. We have our advanced pickets doubled, and two sentries at every post. The men on the advanced pickets are constantly under arms, with fixed bayonets, all through the night, and relieved every two hours. The half that are relieved lie down by their arms, but are not suffered to leave their pickets. 'Tis evident that we are drawing very near to the enemy now. This packet goes out with the General's to Colonel Dunbar's camp, who is thirty miles behind us; and will be carried thence to Frederick, and thence to my honoured mother's house at Castlewood, to whom I send my duty, with kindest remembrances, as to all friends there, and how much love I need not say to my dearest brother from his affectionate

"George E. Warrington."

The whole land was now lying parched and scorching in the July heat. For ten days no news had come from the column advancing on the Ohio. Their march, though it toiled but slowly through the painful forest, must bring them ere long up with the enemy; the troops, led by consummate captains, were accustomed now to the wilderness, and not afraid of surprise. Every precaution had been taken against ambush. It was the outlying enemy who were discovered, pursued, destroyed, by the vigilant scouts and skirmishers of the British force. The last news heard was that the army had advanced considerably beyond the ground of Mr. Washington's discomfiture in the previous year, and two days after must be within a day's march of the French fort. About taking it no fears were entertained; the amount of the French reinforcements from Montreal was known. Mr. Braddock, with his two veteran regiments from Britain, and their allies of Virginia and Pennsylvania, were more than a match for any troops that could be collected under the white flag.

Such continued to be the talk, in the sparse towns of our Virginian province, at the gentry's houses, and the rough road-side taverns, where people met and canvassed the war. The few messengers who were sent back by the General reported well of the main force. 'Twas thought the enemy would not stand or defend himself at all. Had he intended to attack, he might have seized a dozen occasions for assaulting our troops at passes through which they had been allowed to go entirely free. So George had given up his favourite mare, like a hero as he was, and was marching afoot with the line? Madam Esmond vowed that he should have the best horse in Virginia or Carolina in place of Roxana. There were

horses enough to be had in the provinces, and for money. It was only for the King's service that they were not forthcoming.

Although at their family meetings and repasts the inmates of Castlewood always talked cheerfully, never anticipating any but a triumphant issue to the campaign, or acknowledging any feeling of disquiet, yet, it must be owned they were mighty uneasy when at home, quitting it ceaselessly, and for ever on the trot from one neighbour's house to another in quest of news. It was prodigious how quickly reports ran and spread. When, for instance, a certain noted border warrior, called Colonel Jack, had offered himself and his huntsmen to the General, who had declined the ruffian's terms or his proffered service, the defection of Jack and his men was the talk of thousands of tongues immediately. The house negroes, in their midnight gallops about the country, in search of junketing or sweethearts, brought and spread news over amazingly wide districts. They had a curious knowledge of the incidents of the march for a fortnight at least after its commencement. They knew and laughed at the cheats practised on the army for horses, provisions, and the like; for a good bargain over the foreigner was not an unfrequent or unpleasant practice among New Yorkers, Pennsylvanians, or Marylanders; though 'tis known that American folks have become perfectly artless and simple in later times, and never grasp, and never overreach, and are never selfish now. For three weeks after the army's departure, the thousand reports regarding it were cheerful; and when our Castlewood friends met at their supper, their tone was confident and their news pleasant.

But on the 10th of July a vast and sudden gloom

spread over the province. A look of terror and doubt seemed to fall upon every face. Affrighted negroes wistfully eyed their masters, and retired, and hummed and whispered with one another. The fiddles ceased in the quarters: the song and laugh of those cheery black folk were hushed. Right and left, everybody's servants were on the gallop for news. The country taverns were thronged with horsemen, who drank and cursed and brawled at the bars, each bringing his gloomy story. The army had been surprised. The troops had fallen into an ambuscade, and had been cut up almost to a man. All the officers were taken down by the French marksmen and the savages. The General had been wounded, and carried off the field in his sash. Four days afterwards the report was that the General was dead, and scalped by a French Indian.

Ah, what a scream poor Mrs. Mountain gave, when Gumbo brought this news from across the James River, and little Fanny sprang crying to her mother's arms! "Lord God Almighty, watch over us, and defend my boy!" said Mrs. Esmond, sinking down on her knees, and lifting her rigid hands to Heaven. The gentlemen were not at home when this rumour arrived, but they came in an hour or two afterwards, each from his hunt for news. The Scots tutor did not dare to look up and meet the widow's agonising looks. Harry Warrington was as pale as his mother. It might not be true about the manner of the General's death—but he was dead. The army had been surprised by Indians, and had fled, and been killed without seeing the enemy. An express had arrived from Dunbar's camp. Fugitives were pouring in there. Should he go and see? He must go and see. He and stout little Dempster armed themselves and

mounted, taking a couple of mounted servants with them.

They followed the northward track which the expeditionary army had hewed out for itself, and at every step which brought them nearer to the scene of action, the disaster of the fearful day seemed to magnify. The day after the defeat a number of the miserable fugitives from the fatal battle of the 9th July had reached Dunbar's camp, fifty miles from the field. Thither poor Harry and his companions rode, stopping stragglers, asking news, giving money, getting from one and all the same gloomy tale. A thousand men were slain—two-thirds of the officers were down—all the General's aides-de-camp were hit. Were hit?—but were they killed? Those who fell never rose again. The tomahawk did its work upon them. O brother, brother! All the fond memories of their youth, all the dear remembrances of their childhood, the love and the laughter, the tender romantic vows which they had pledged to each other as lads, were recalled by Harry with pangs inexpressibly keen. Wounded men looked up and were softened by his grief: rough women melted as they saw the woe written on the handsome young face: the hardy old tutor could scarcely look at him for tears, and grieved for him even more than for his dear pupil who lay dead under the savage Indian knife.

The Wilderness

CHAPTER XIII

PROFITLESS QUEST

AT every step which Harry Warrington took towards Pennsylvania, the reports of the British disaster were magnified and confirmed. Those two famous regiments which had fought in the Scottish and Continental wars, had fled from an enemy almost unseen, and their boasted discipline and valour had not enabled them to face a band of savages and a few French infantry. The unfortunate commander of the expedition had shown the utmost bravery and resolution. Four times his horse had been shot under him. Twice he had been wounded, and the last time of the mortal hurt which ended his life three days after the battle. More than one of Harry's informants described the action to the poor lad,—the passage of the river, the long line of advance through the

wilderness, the firing in front, the vain struggle of the men to advance, and the artillery to clear the way of the enemy; then the ambushed fire from behind every bush and tree, and the murderous fusilade, by which at least half of the expeditionary force had been shot down. But not all the General's suite were killed, Harry heard. One of his aides-de-camp, a Virginian gentleman, was ill of fever and exhausted at Dunbar's camp.

One of them—but which? To the camp Harry hurried, and reached it at length. It was George Washington Harry found stretched in a tent there, and not his brother. A sharper pain than that of the fever Mr. Washington declared he felt, when he saw Harry Warrington, and could give him no news of George.

Mr. Washington did not dare to tell Harry all. For three days after the fight his duty had been to be near the General. On the fatal 9th of July, he had seen George go to the front with orders from the chief, to whose side he never returned. After Braddock himself died, the aide-de-camp had found means to retrace his course to the field. The corpses which remained there were stripped and horribly mutilated. One body he buried which he thought to be George Warrington's. His own illness was increased, perhaps occasioned, by the anguish which he underwent in his search for the unhappy young volunteer.

"Ah, George! If you had loved him you would have found him dead or alive," Harry cried out. Nothing would satisfy him but that he, too, should go to the ground and examine it. With money he procured a guide or two. He forded the river at the place where the army had passed over; he went from one end to the other of the dreadful field. It was no longer haunted

by Indians now. The birds of prey were feeding on the mangled festering carcasses. Save in his own grandfather, lying very calm, with a sweet smile on his lip, Harry had never yet seen the face of Death. The horrible spectacle of mutilation caused him to turn away with shudder and loathing. What news could the vacant woods, or those festering corpses lying under the trees, give the lad of his lost brother? He was for going, unarmed and with a white flag, to the French fort, whither, after their victory, the enemy had returned; but his guides refused to advance with him. The French might possibly respect them, but the Indians would not. "Keep your hair for your lady-mother, my young gentleman," said the guide. "'Tis enough that she loses one son in this campaign."

When Harry returned to the English encampment at Dunbar's, it was his turn to be down with the fever. Delirium set in upon him, and he lay some time in the tent and on the bed from which his friend had just risen convalescent. For some days he did not know who watched him: and poor Dempster, who had tended him in more than one of these maladies, thought the widow must lose both her children; but the fever was so far subdued that the boy was enabled to rally somewhat, and get to horseback. Mr. Washington and Dempster both escorted him home. It was with a heavy heart, no doubt, that all three beheld once more the gates of Castlewood.

A servant in advance had been sent to announce their coming. First came Mrs. Mountain and her little daughter, welcoming Harry with many tears and embraces; but she scarce gave a nod of recognition to Mr. Washington; and the little girl caused the young

officer to start, and turn deadly pale, by coming up to him with her hands behind her, and asking, "Why have you not brought George back, too?" Harry did not hear. The sobs and caresses of his good friend and nurse luckily kept him from listening to little Fanny.

Dempster was graciously received by the two ladies. "Whatever could be done, we know *you* would do, Mr. Dempster," says Mrs. Mountain, giving him her hand. "Make a curtsey to Mr. Dempster, Fanny, and remember, child, to be grateful to all who have been friendly to our benefactors. Will it please you to take any refreshment before you ride, Colonel Washington?"

Mr. Washington had had a sufficient ride already, and counted as certainly upon the hospitality of Castlewood, as he would upon the shelter of his own house.

"The time to feed my horse, and a glass of water for myself, and I will trouble Castlewood hospitality no farther," Mr. Washington said.

"Sure, George, you have your room here, and my mother is above stairs getting it ready!" cries Harry. "That poor horse of yours stumbled with you, and can't go farther this evening."

"Hush! Your mother won't see him, child," whispered Mrs. Mountain.

"Not see George? Why, he is like a son of the house," cries Harry.

"She had best not see him. *I* don't meddle any more in family matters, child: but when the Colonel's servant rode in, and said you were coming, Madam Esmond left this room, my dear, where she was sitting reading 'Drelincourt,' and said she felt she could not see Mr. Washington. Will you go to her?" Harry took his friend's arm, and excusing himself to the Colonel, to whom he

said he would return in a few minutes, he left the parlour in which they had assembled, and went to the upper rooms, where Madam Esmond was.

He was hastening across the corridor, and, with an averted head, passing by one especial door, which he did not like to look at, for it was that of his brother's room; but as he came to it, Madam Esmond issued from it, and folded him to her heart, and led him in. A settee was by the bed, and a book of psalms lay on the coverlet. All the rest of the room was exactly as George had left it.

"My poor child! How thin thou art grown—how haggard you look! Never mind. A mother's care will make thee well again. 'Twas nobly done to go and brave sickness and danger in search of your brother. Had others been as faithful, he might be here now. Never mind, my Harry; our hero will come back to us, —I know he is not dead. One so good, and so brave, and so gentle, and so clever as he was, I know is not lost to us altogether." (Perhaps Harry thought within himself that his mother had not always been accustomed so to speak of her eldest son.) "Dry up thy tears, my dear! He will come back to us, I know he will come." And when Harry pressed her to give a reason for her belief, she said she had seen her father two nights running in a dream, and he had told her that her boy was a prisoner among the Indians.

Madam Esmond's grief had not prostrated her as Harry's had when first it fell upon him; it had rather stirred and animated her: her eyes were eager, her countenance angry and revengeful. The lad wondered almost at the condition in which he found his mother.

But when he besought her to go down stairs, and give

a hand of welcome to George Washington, who had accompanied him, the lady's excitement painfully increased. She said she should shudder at touching his hand. She declared Mr. Washington had taken her son from her, she could not sleep under the same roof with him.

"He gave me his bed when I was ill, mother; and if our George is alive, how has George Washington a hand in his death? Ah! please God it be only as you say," cried Harry, in bewilderment.

"If your brother returns, as return he will, it will not be through Mr. Washington's help," said Madam Esmond. "He neither defended George on the field, nor would he bring him out of it."

"But he tended me most kindly in my fever," interposed Harry. "He was yet ill when he gave up his bed to me, and was thinking of his friend, when any other man would have thought only of himself."

"A friend! A pretty friend!" sneers the lady. "Of all his Excellency's aides-de-camp, my gentleman is the only one who comes back unwounded. The brave and noble fall, but he, to be sure, is unhurt. I confide my boy to him, the pride of my life, whom he will defend with his, forsooth! And he leaves my George in the forest, and brings me back himself! Oh, a pretty welcome I must give him!"

"No gentleman," cried Harry, warmly, "was ever refused shelter under my grandfather's roof."

"Oh, no,—no *gentleman!*" exclaims the little widow; "let us go down, if you like, son, and pay our respects to this one. Will you please to give me your arm?" and taking an arm which was very little able to give her support, she walked down the broad stairs, and into the apartment where the Colonel sat.

She made him a ceremonious curtsey, and extended one of the little hands, which she allowed for a moment to rest in his. "I wish that our meeting had been happier, Colonel Washington," she said.

"You do not grieve more than I do that it is otherwise, Madam," said the Colonel.

"I might have wished that the meeting had been spared, that I might not have kept you from friends whom you are naturally anxious to see,—that my boy's indisposition had not detained you. Home and his good nurse Mountain, and his mother and our good Doctor Dempster will soon restore him. 'Twas scarce necessary, Colonel, that you who have so many affairs on your hands, military and domestic, should turn doctor too."

"Harry was ill and weak, and I thought it was my duty to ride by him," faltered the Colonel.

"You yourself, sir, have gone through the *fatigues* and *dangers* of the campaign in the most wonderful manner," said the widow, curtseying again, and looking at him with her impenetrable black eyes.

"I wish to Heaven, Madam, some one else had come back in my place!"

"Nay, sir, you have ties which must render your life more than ever valuable and dear to you, and duties to which, I know, you must be anxious to betake yourself. In our present deplorable state of doubt and distress, Castlewood can be a welcome place to no stranger, much less to you, and so I know, sir, you will be for leaving us ere long. And you will pardon me if the state of my own spirits obliges me for the most part to keep my chamber. But my friends here will bear you company as long as you favour us, whilst I nurse my poor Harry up stairs. Mountain! you will have the cedar room on the ground-floor ready for Mr. Washington, and any-

thing in the house is at his command. Farewell, sir. Will you be pleased to present my compliments to your mother, who will be thankful to have her son safe and sound out of the war,—as also to my young friend Martha Curtis, to whom and to whose children I wish every happiness. Come, my son!" and with these words, and another freezing curtsey, the pale little woman retreated, looking steadily at the Colonel, who stood dumb on the floor.

Strong as Madam Esmond's belief appeared to be respecting her son's safety, the house of Castlewood naturally remained sad and gloomy. She might forbid mourning for herself and family; but her heart was in black, whatever face the resolute little lady persisted in wearing before the world. To look for her son was hoping against hope. No authentic account of his death had indeed arrived, and no one appeared who had seen him fall; but hundreds more had been so stricken on that fatal day, with no eyes to behold their last pangs, save those of the lurking enemy and the comrades dying by their side. A fortnight after the defeat, when Harry was absent on his quest, George's servant, Sady, reappeared wounded and maimed at Castlewood. But he could give no coherent account of the battle, only of his flight from the centre, where he was with the baggage. He had no news of his master since the morning of the action. For many days Sady lurked in the negro quarters away from the sight of Madam Esmond, whose anger he did not dare to face. That lady's few neighbours spoke of her as labouring under a delusion. So strong was it, that there were times when Harry and the other members of the little Castlewood family were al-

most brought to share in it. It seemed nothing strange to *her*, that her father out of another world should promise her her son's life. In this world or the next, that family sure must be of consequence, she thought. Nothing had ever yet happened to her sons: no accident, no fever, no important illness, but she had a prevision of it. She could enumerate half-a-dozen instances, which, indeed, her household was obliged more or less to confirm, how, when anything had happened to the boys at ever so great a distance, she had known of their mishap and its consequences. No, George was not dead; George was a prisoner among the Indians; George would come back and rule over Castlewood; as sure, as sure as his Majesty would send a great force from home to recover the tarnished glory of the British arms, and to drive the French out of the Americas.

As for Mr. Washington, she would never, with her own good will, behold him again. He had promised to protect George with his life. Why was her son gone and the Colonel alive? How dared he to face her after that promise, and appear before a mother without her son? She trusted she knew her duty. She bore ill will to no one: but as an Esmond, she had a sense of honour, and Mr. Washington had forfeited his in letting her son out of his sight. He had to obey superior orders (some one perhaps objected)? Psha! a promise was a promise. He had promised to guard George's life with his own, and where was her boy? And was not the Colonel (a pretty *Colonel,* indeed!) sound and safe? "Do not tell me that his coat and hat had shots through them!" (This was her answer to another humble plea in Mr. Washington's behalf.) "Can't I go into the study this instant and fire two shots with my papa's pistols through this

paduasoy skirt,—and should *I* be killed?" She laughed at the notion of death resulting from any such operation; nor was her laugh very pleasant to hear. The satire of people who have little natural humour is seldom good sport for bystanders. I think dull men's *facetiæ* are mostly cruel.

So, if Harry wanted to meet his friend, he had to do so in secret, at court-houses, taverns, or various places of resort; or in their little towns, where the provincial gentry assembled. No man of spirit, she vowed, could meet Mr. Washington after his base desertion of her family. She was exceedingly excited when she heard that the Colonel and her son absolutely had met. What a *heart* must Harry have to give his hand to one whom she considered as little better than George's murderer! For shame to say so! "For shame upon *you*, ungrateful boy, forgetting the dearest, noblest, most perfect of brothers, for that tall, gawky, fox-hunting Colonel, with his horrid oaths! How can he be George's murderer, when I say my boy is not dead? He is not dead, because my instinct never deceived me: because, as sure as I see his picture now before me,—only 'tis not near so noble or so good as he used to look,—so surely two nights running did my papa appear to me in my dreams. You doubt about that, very likely? 'Tis because you never loved anybody sufficiently, my poor Harry; else you might have leave to see them in dreams, as has been vouchsafed to some."

"I think I loved George, mother," cried Harry. "I have often prayed that I might dream about him, and I don't."

"How you can talk, sir, of loving George, and then go and meet your Mr. Washington at horse-races, I can't understand! Can you, Mountain?"

"We can't understand many things in our neighbours' characters. I can understand that our boy is unhappy, and that he does not get strength, and that he is doing no good here, in Castlewood, or moping at the taverns and court-houses with horse-coupers and idle company," grumbled Mountain in reply to her patroness; and, in truth, the dependant was right.

There was not only grief in the Castlewood House, but there was disunion. "I cannot tell how it came," said Harry, as he brought the story to an end, which we have narrated in the preceding pages, and which he confided to his new-found English relative, Madame de Bernstein; "but since that fatal day of July, last year, and my return home, my mother never has been the same woman. She seemed to love none of us as she used. She was for ever praising George, and yet she did not seem as if she liked him much when he was with us. She hath plunged, more deeply than ever, into her books of devotion, out of which she only manages to extract grief and sadness, as I think. Such a gloom has fallen over our wretched Virginian House of Castlewood, that we all grew ill, and pale as ghosts, who inhabited it. Mountain told me, Madam, that, for nights, my mother would not close her eyes. I have had her at my bedside, looking so ghastly, that I have started from my own sleep, fancying a ghost before me. By one means or other she has wrought herself into a state of excitement which, if not delirium, is akin to it. I was again and again struck down by the fever, and all the Jesuits' bark in America could not cure me. We have a tobacco-house and some land about the new town of Richmond, in our province, and I went thither, as Williamsburg is no wholesomer than our own place; and there I mended a little, but still

did not get quite well, and the physicians strongly counselled a sea-voyage. My mother, at one time, had thoughts of coming with me, but"—(and here the lad blushed and hung his head down)—"we did not agree very well, though I know we loved each other very heartily, and 'twas determined that I should see the world for myself. So I took passage in our ship from the James River, and was landed at Bristol. And 'twas only on the 9th of July, this year, at sea, as had been agreed between me and Madam Esmond, that I put mourning on for my dear brother."

So that little Mistress of the Virginian Castlewood, for whom, I am sure, we have all the greatest respect, had the knack of rendering the people round about her uncomfortable; quarrelled with those she loved best, and exercised over them her wayward jealousies and imperious humours, until they were not sorry to leave her. Here was money enough, friends enough, a good position, and the respect of the world; a house stored with all manner of plenty, and good things, and poor Harry Warrington was glad to leave them all behind him. Happy! Who is happy? What good in a stalled ox for dinner every day, and no content therewith? Is it best to be loved and plagued by those you love, or to have an easy, comfortable indifference at home; to follow your fancies, live there unmolested, and die without causing any painful regrets or tears?

To be sure, when her boy was gone, Madam Esmond forgot all these little tiffs and differences. To hear her speak of both her children, you would fancy they were perfect characters, and had never caused her a moment's worry or annoyance. These gone, Madam fell naturally

upon Mrs. Mountain and her little daughter, and worried and annoyed them. But women bear with hard words more easily than men, are more ready to forgive injuries, or, perhaps, to dissemble anger. Let us trust that Madam Esmond's dependants found their life tolerable, that they gave her ladyship sometimes as good as they got, that if they quarrelled in the morning they were reconciled at night, and sat down to a tolerably friendly game at cards and an amicable dish of tea.

But, without the boys, the great house of Castlewood was dreary to the widow. She left an overseer there to manage her estates, and only paid the place an occasional visit. She enlarged and beautified her house in the pretty little city of Richmond, which began to grow daily in importance. She had company there, and card assemblies, and preachers in plenty; and set up her little throne there, to which the gentlefolks of the province were welcome to come and bow. All her domestic negroes, who loved society as negroes will do, were delighted to exchange the solitude of Castlewood for the gay and merry little town; where, for a time, and while we pursue Harry Warrington's progress in Europe, we leave the good lady.

CHAPTER XIV

HARRY IN ENGLAND

WHEN the famous Trojan wanderer narrated his escapes and adventures to Queen Dido, her Majesty, as we read, took the very greatest interest in the fascinating story-teller who told his perils so eloquently. A history ensued, more pathetic than any of the previous occurrences in the life of Pius Æneas, and the poor princess had reason to rue the day when she listened to that glib and dangerous orator. Harry Warrington had not pious Æneas's power of speech, and his elderly aunt, we may presume, was by no means so soft-hearted as the sentimental Dido; but yet the lad's narrative was touching, as he delivered it with his artless eloquence and cordial voice; and more than once, in the course of his story, Madam Bernstein found herself moved to a soft-

ness to which she had very seldom before allowed herself to give way. There were not many fountains in that desert of a life—not many sweet refreshing resting-places. It had been a long loneliness, for the most part, until this friendly voice came and sounded in her ears and caused her heart to beat with strange pangs of love and sympathy. She doted on this lad, and on this sense of compassion and regard so new to her. Save once, faintly, in very very early youth, she had felt no tender sentiment for any human being. Such a woman would, no doubt, watch her own sensations very keenly, and must have smiled, after the appearance of this boy, to mark how her pulses rose above their ordinary beat. She longed after him. She felt her cheeks flush with happiness when he came near. Her eyes greeted him with welcome, and followed him with fond pleasure. "Ah, if she could have had a son like that, how she would have loved him!" "Wait," says Conscience, the dark scoffer mocking within her, "wait, Beatrix Esmond! You know you will weary of this inclination, as you have of all. You know, when the passing fancy has subsided, that the boy may perish, and you won't have a tear for him; or talk, and you weary of his stories; and that your lot in life is to be lonely—lonely." Well? suppose life *be* a desert? There are halting-places and shades, and refreshing waters; let us profit by them for to-day. We know that we must march when to-morrow comes, and tramp on our destiny onward.

She smiled inwardly, whilst following the lad's narrative, to recognize in his simple tales about his mother traits of family resemblance. Madam Esmond was very jealous?—Yes, that Harry owned. She was fond of Colonel Washington? She liked him, but only as a

friend, Harry declared. A hundred times he had heard his mother vow that she had no other feeling towards him. He was ashamed to have to own that he himself had been once absurdly jealous of the Colonel. "Well, you will see that my half-sister will never forgive him," said Madam Beatrix. "And *you* need not be surprised, sir, at women taking a fancy to men younger than themselves; for don't I dote upon you; and don't all these Castlewood people *crèvent* with jealousy?"

However great might be their jealousy of Madame de Bernstein's new favourite, the family of Castlewood allowed no feeling of ill will to appear in their language or behaviour to their young guest and kinsman. After a couple of days' stay in the ancestral house, Mr. Harry Warrington had become Cousin Harry with young and middle-aged. Especially in Madame Bernstein's presence, the Countess of Castlewood was most gracious to her kinsman, and she took many amiable private opportunities of informing the Baroness how charming the young Huron was, of vaunting the elegance of his manners and appearance, and wondering how, in his distant province, the child should ever have learned to be so polite.

These notes of admiration or interrogation, the Baroness took with equal complacency. (Speaking parenthetically, and, for his own part, the present chronicler cannot help putting in a little respectful remark here, and signifying his admiration of the conduct of ladies towards one another, and of the things which they say, which they forbear to say, and which they say behind each other's backs. With what smiles and curtseys they stab each other! with what compliments they hate each other! with what determination of long-suffering they

won't be offended! with what innocent dexterity they can drop the drop of poison into the cup of conversation, hand round the goblet, smiling, to the whole family to drink, and make the dear domestic circle miserable!) — I burst out of my parenthesis. I fancy my Baroness and Countess smiling at each other a hundred years ago, and giving each other the hand or the cheek, and calling each other, My dear, My dear creature, My dear Countess, My dear Baroness, My dear sister—even, when they were most ready to fight.

"You wonder, my dear Anna, that the boy should be so polite?" cries Madame de Bernstein. "His mother was bred up by two very perfect gentlefolks. Colonel Esmond had a certain grave courteousness, and a grand manner, which I do not see among the gentlemen now-a-days."

"Eh, my dear, we all of us praise our own time! My grandmamma used to declare there was nothing like Whitehall and Charles the Second."

"My mother saw King James the Second's court for a short while, and though not a court-educated person, as you know—her father was a country clergyman—yet was exquisitely well bred. The Colonel, her second husband, was a person of great travel and experience, as well as of learning, and had frequented the finest company of Europe. They could not go into their retreat and leave their good manners behind them, and our boy has had them as his natural inheritance."

"Nay, excuse me, my dear, for thinking you too partial about your mother. She *could* not have been that perfection which your filial fondness imagines. She left off liking her daughter—my dear creature, you have owned that she did—and I cannot fancy a com-

plete woman who has a cold heart. No, no, my dear sister-in-law! Manners are very requisite, no doubt, and, for a country parson's daughter, your mamma was very well—I have seen many of the cloth who are very well. Mr. Sampson, our chaplain, is very well. Dr. Young is very well. Mr. Dodd is very well; but they have not the true air—as how should they? I protest, I beg pardon! I forgot my lord bishop, your ladyship's first choice. But, as I said before, to be a complete woman, one must have, what you have, what I may say, and bless heaven for, I think *I* have—a *good* heart. Without the affections, all the world is vanity, my love! I protest I only live, exist, eat, drink, rest, for my sweet, sweet children!—for my wicked Willy, for my self-willed Fanny, dear naughty loves!" (She rapturously kisses a bracelet on each arm which contains the miniature representations of those two young persons. "Yes, Mimi! yes, Fanchon! you know I do, you dear, dear little things! and if they were to die, or you were to die, your poor mistress would die, too!" Mimi and Fanchon, two quivering Italian greyhounds, jump into their lady's arms, and kiss her hands, but respect her cheeks, which are covered with rouge. "No, my dear! For nothing do I bless heaven so much (though it puts me to excruciating torture very often) as for having endowed me with sensibility and a feeling heart!"

"You are full of feeling, dear Anna," says the Baroness. "You are celebrated for your sensibility. You must give a little of it to our American nephew—cousin—I scarce know his relationship."

"Nay, I am here but as a guest in Castlewood now. The house is my Lord Castlewood's, not mine, or his lordship's whenever he shall choose to claim it. What

A Dancing Lesson

can I do for the young Virginian that has not been done? He is charming. Are we even jealous of him for being so, my dear? and though we see what a fancy the Baroness de Bernstein has taken for him, do your ladyship's nephews and nieces—your *real* nephews and nieces—cry out? My poor children might be mortified, for indeed, in a few hours, the charming young man has made as much way as *my* poor things have been able to do in all their lives: but are they angry? Willy hath taken him out to ride. This morning, was not Maria playing the harpsichord whilst my Fanny taught him the minuet? 'Twas a charming young group, I assure you, and it brought tears into my eyes to look at the young creatures. Poor lad! we are as fond of him as you are, dear Baroness!"

Now, Madame de Bernstein had happened, through her own ears or her maid's, to overhear what really took place in consequence of this harmless little scene. Lady Castlewood had come into the room where the young people were thus engaged in amusing and instructing themselves, accompanied by her son William, who arrived in his boots from the kennel.

"Bravi, bravi! Oh, charming!" said the Countess, clapping her hands, nodding with one of her best smiles to Harry Warrington, and darting a look at his partner, which my Lady Fanny perfectly understood; and so, perhaps, did my Lady Maria at her harpsichord, for she played with redoubled energy, and nodded her waving curls over the chords.

"Infernal young Choctaw! Is he teaching Fanny the war-dance? and is Fan going to try her tricks upon him now?" asked Mr. William, whose temper was not of the best.

And that was what Lady Castlewood's look said to Fanny. "Are you going to try your tricks upon him now?"

She made Harry a very low curtsey, and he blushed, and they both stopped dancing, somewhat disconcerted. Lady Maria rose from the harpsichord and walked away.

"Nay, go on dancing, young people! Don't let me spoil sport, and let me play for you," said the Countess; and she sat down to the instrument and played.

"I don't know how to dance," says Harry, hanging his head down, with a blush that the Countess's finest carmine could not equal.

"And Fanny was teaching you? Go on teaching him, dearest Fanny!"

"Go on, do!" says William, with a sidelong growl.

"I—I had rather not show off my awkwardness in company," adds Harry, recovering himself. "When I know how to dance a minuet, be sure I will ask my cousin to walk one with me."

"That will be *very* soon, dear Cousin Warrington, I am certain," remarks the Countess, with her most gracious air.

"What game is she hunting now?" thinks Mr. William to himself, who cannot penetrate his mother's ways; and that lady, fondly calling her daughter to her elbow, leaves the room.

They are no sooner in the tapestried passage leading away to their own apartment, but Lady Castlewood's bland tone entirely changes. "You booby!" she begins to her adored Fanny. "You double idiot! What are you going to do with the Huron? You don't want to marry a creature like that, and be a squaw in a wigwam?"

"Don't, mamma!" gasped Lady Fanny. Mamma was pinching her ladyship's arm black and blue. "I am sure our cousin is very well," Fanny whimpers, "and you said so yourself."

"Very well! Yes; and heir to a swamp, a negro, a

log-cabin and a barrel of tobacco! My Lady Frances Esmond, do you remember what your ladyship's rank is, and what your name is, and who was your ladyship's mother, when, at three days' acquaintance, you commence dancing—a pretty dance, indeed!—with this brat out of Virginia."

"Mr. Warrington is our cousin," pleads Lady Fanny.

"A creature come from nobody knows where is not your cousin! How do we know he is your cousin? He may be a valet who has taken his master's portmanteau, and run away in his post-chaise."

"But Madame de Bernstein says he is our cousin," interposes Fanny; "and he is the image of the Esmonds."

"Madame de Bernstein has her likes and dislikes, takes up people and forgets people; and she chooses to profess a mighty fancy for this young man. Because she likes him to-day, is that any reason why she should like him to-morrow? Before company, and in your aunt's presence, your ladyship will please to be as civil to him as necessary; but, in private, I forbid you to see him or encourage him."

"I don't care, Madam, whether your ladyship forbids me or not!" cries out Lady Fanny, wrought up to a pitch of revolt.

"Very good, Fanny! then I speak to my lord, and we return to Kensington. If I can't bring you to reason, your brother will."

At this juncture the conversation between mother and daughter stopped, or Madame de Bernstein's informer had no further means of hearing or reporting it.

It was only in after-days that she told Harry Warrington a part of what she knew. At present he but saw that his kinsfolk received him not unkindly. Lady Castlewood was perfectly civil to him; the young ladies pleasant and pleased; my Lord Castlewood, a man of cold and haughty demeanour, was not more reserved towards Harry than to any of the rest of the family; Mr. William was ready to drink with him, to ride with him, to go to races with him, and to play cards with him.

When he proposed to go away, they one and all pressed him to stay. Madame de Bernstein did not tell him how it arose that he was the object of such eager hospitality. He did not know what schemes he was serving or disarranging, whose or what anger he was creating. He fancied he was welcome because those around him were his kinsmen, and never thought that those could be his enemies out of whose cup he was drinking, and whose hand he was pressing every night and morning.

CHAPTER XV

A SUNDAY AT CASTLEWOOD

THE second day after Harry's arrival at Castlewood was a Sunday. The chapel appertaining to the castle was the village church. A door from the house communicated with a great state pew which the family occupied, and here, after due time, they all took their places in order, whilst a rather numerous congregation from the village filled the seats below. A few ancient dusty banners hung from the church roof; and Harry pleased himself in imagining that they had been borne by retainers of his family in the Commonwealth wars, in which, as he knew well, his ancestors had taken a loyal and distinguished part. Within the altar-rails was the effigy of the Esmond of the time of King James the First, the common forefather of all the group assembled in the family-pew. Madame de Bernstein, in her quality of Bishop's widow, never failed in attendance, and conducted her devotions with a gravity almost as exemplary as that of the ancestor

yonder, in his square beard and red gown, for ever kneeling on his stone hassock before his great marble desk and book, under his emblazoned shield of arms. The clergyman, a tall, high-coloured, handsome young man, read the service in a lively, agreeable voice, giving almost a dramatic point to the chapters of Scripture which he read. The music was good—one of the young ladies of the family touching the organ—and would have been better but for an interruption and something like a burst of laughter from the servants' pew, which was occasioned by Mr. Warrington's lacquey Gumbo, who, knowing the air given out for the psalm, began to sing it in a voice so exceedingly loud and sweet, that the whole congregation turned towards the African warbler; the parson himself put his handkerchief to his mouth, and the liveried gentlemen from London were astonished out of all propriety. Pleased, perhaps, with the sensation which he had created, Mr. Gumbo continued his performance until it became almost a solo, and the voice of the clerk himself was silenced. For the truth is, that though Gumbo held on to the book, along with pretty Molly, the porter's daughter, who had been the first to welcome the strangers to Castlewood, he sang and recited by ear and not by note, and could not read a syllable of the verses in the book before him.

This choral performance over, a brief sermon in due course followed, which, indeed, Harry thought a deal too short. In a lively, familiar, striking discourse the clergyman described a scene of which he had been witness the previous week—the execution of a horse-stealer after Assizes. He described the man and his previous good character, his family, the love they bore one another, and his agony at parting from them. He depicted

the execution in a manner startling, terrible and picturesque. He did not introduce into his sermon the Scripture phraseology, such as Harry had been accustomed to hear from those somewhat Calvinistic preachers whom his mother loved to frequent, but rather spoke as one man of the world to other sinful people, who might be likely to profit by good advice. The unhappy man just gone, had begun as a farmer of good prospects; he had taken to drinking, card-playing, horse-racing, cock-fighting, the vices of the age; against which the young clergyman was generously indignant. Then he had got to poaching and to horse-stealing, for which he suffered. The divine rapidly drew striking and fearful pictures of these rustic crimes. He startled his hearers by showing that the Eye of the Law was watching the poacher at midnight, and setting traps to catch the criminal. He galloped the stolen horse over highway and common, and from one county into another, but showed Retribution ever galloping after, seizing the malefactor in the country fair, carrying him before the justice, and never unlocking his manacles till he dropped them at the gallows'-foot. Heaven be pitiful to the sinner! The clergyman acted the scene. He whispered in the criminal's ear at the cart. He dropped his handkerchief on the clerk's head. Harry started back as that handkerchief dropped. The clergyman had been talking for more than twenty minutes. Harry could have heard him for an hour more, and thought he had not been five minutes in the pulpit. The gentlefolks in the great pew were very much enlivened by the discourse. Once or twice, Harry, who could see the pew where the house servants sat, remarked these very attentive; and especially Gumbo, his own man, in an attitude of intense conster-

nation. But the smock-frocks did not seem to heed, and clamped out of church quite unconcerned. Gaffer Brown and Gammer Jones took the matter as it came, and the rosy-cheeked, red-cloaked village lasses sat under their broad hats entirely unmoved. My lord, from his pew, nodded slightly to the clergyman in the pulpit, when that divine's head and wig surged up from the cushion.

"Sampson has been strong to-day," said his lordship. "He has assaulted the Philistines in great force."

"Beautiful, beautiful!" says Harry.

"Bet five to four it was his Assize sermon. He has been over to Winton to preach, and to see those dogs," cries William.

The organist had played the little congregation out into the sunshine. Only Sir Francis Esmond, temp. Jac. I., still knelt on his marble hassock, before his prayer-book of stone. Mr. Sampson came out of his vestry in his cassock, and nodded to the gentlemen still lingering in the great pew.

"Come up, and tell us about those dogs," says Mr. William, and the divine nodded a laughing assent.

The gentlemen passed out of the church into the gallery of their house, which connected them with that sacred building. Mr. Sampson made his way through the court, and presently joined them. He was presented by my lord to the Virginian cousin of the family, Mr. Warrington: the chaplain bowed very profoundly, and hoped Mr. Warrington would benefit by the virtuous example of his European kinsmen. Was he related to Sir Miles Warrington of Norfolk? Sir Miles was Mr. Warrington's father's elder brother. What a pity he had a son! 'Twas a pretty estate, and Mr. Warrington

looked as if he would become a baronetcy, and a fine estate in Norfolk.

"Tell me about my uncle," cried Virginian Harry.

"Tell us about those dogs!" said English Will, in a breath.

"Two more jolly dogs, two more drunken dogs, saving your presence Mr. Warrington, than Sir Miles and his son, I never saw. Sir Miles was a staunch friend and neighbour of Sir Robert's. He can drink down any man in the county, except his son and a few more. The other dogs about which Mr. William is anxious, for heaven hath made him a prey to dogs and all kinds of birds, like the Greeks in the Iliad—"

"I know that line in the Iliad," says Harry, blushing. "I only know five more, but I know that one." And his head fell. He was thinking, "Ah, my dear brother George knew all the Iliad and all the Odyssey, and almost every book that was ever written besides!"

"What on earth" (only he mentioned a place under the earth) "are you talking about now?" asked Will of his reverence.

The chaplain reverted to the dogs and their performance. He thought Mr. William's dogs were more than a match for them. From dogs they went off to horses. Mr. William was very eager about the Six Year Old Plate at Huntingdon. "Have you brought any news of it, Parson?"

"The odds are five to four on Brilliant against the field," says the Parson, gravely, "but, mind you, Jason is a good horse."

"Whose horse?" asks my lord.

"Duke of Ancaster's. By Cartouche out of Miss

Langley," says the divine. "Have you horse-races in Virginia, Mr. Warrington?"

"Haven't we!" cries Harry; "but oh! I long to see a good English race!"

"Do you—do you—bet a little?" continues his reverence.

"I have done such a thing," replies Harry with a smile.

"I'll take Brilliant even against the field, for ponies with you, cousin!" shouts out Mr. William.

"I'll give or take three to one against Jason!" says the clergyman.

"I don't bet on horses I don't know," said Harry, wondering to hear the chaplain now, and remembering his sermon half an hour before.

"Hadn't you better write home, and ask your mother?" says Mr. William, with a sneer.

"Will, Will!" calls out my lord, "our cousin Warrington is free to bet, or not, as he likes. Have a care how you venture on either of them, Harry Warrington. Will is an old file, in spite of his smooth face, and as for Parson Sampson, I defy our ghostly enemy to get the better of him."

"Him and all his works, my lord!" said Mr. Sampson, with a bow.

Harry was highly indignant at this allusion to his mother. "I'll tell you what, Cousin Will," he said, "I am in the habit of managing my own affairs in my own way, without asking any lady to arrange them for me. And I'm used to make my own bets upon my own judgment, and don't need any relations to select them for me, thank you. But as I am your guest, and, no doubt,

you want to show me hospitality, I'll take your bet—there. And so Done and Done."

"Done," says Will, looking askance.

"Of course it is the regular odds that's in the paper which you give me, cousin?"

"Well, no, it *isn't,*" growled Will. "The odds are five to four, that's the fact, and you may have 'em, if you like."

"Nay, cousin, a bet is a bet; and I take you, too, Mr. Sampson."

"Three to one against Jason. I lay it. Very good," says Mr. Sampson.

"Is it to be ponies too, Mr. Chaplain?" asks Harry with a superb air, as if he had Lombard Street in his pocket.

"No, no. Thirty to ten. It is enough for a poor priest to win."

"Here goes a great slice out of my quarter's hundred," thinks Harry. "Well, I shan't let these Englishmen fancy that I am afraid of them. I didn't begin, but for the honour of Old Virginia I won't go back."

These pecuniary transactions arranged, William Esmond went away scowling towards the stables, where he loved to take his pipe with the grooms; the brisk parson went off to pay his court to the ladies, and partake of the Sunday dinner which would presently be served. Lord Castlewood and Harry remained for a while together. Since the Virginian's arrival my lord had scarcely spoken with him. In his manners he was perfectly friendly, but so silent that he would often sit at the head of his table, and leave it without uttering a word.

"I suppose yonder property of yours is a fine one by this time?" said my lord to Harry.

"I reckon it's almost as big as an English county," answered Harry, "and the land's as good, too, for many things." Harry would not have the Old Dominion, nor his share in it, underrated.

"Indeed!" said my lord, with a look of surprise. "When it belonged to my father it did not yield much."

"Pardon me, my lord. You know *how* it belonged to your father," cried the youth with some spirit. "It was because my grandfather did not choose to claim his right." [1]

"Of course, of course," says my lord, hastily.

"I mean, cousin, that we of the Virginian house owe you nothing but our own," continued Harry Warrington; "but our own, and the hospitality which you are now showing me."

"You are heartily welcome to both. You were hurt by the betting just now?"

"Well," replied the lad, "I am sort o' hurt. Your welcome, you see, is different to our welcome, and that's the fact. At home we are glad to see a man, hold out a hand to him and give him of our best. Here you take us in, give us beef and claret enough, to be sure, and don't seem to care when we come, or when we go. That's the remark which I have been making since I have been in your lordship's house; I can't help telling it out, you see, now 'tis on my mind; and I think I am a little easier now I have said it." And with this the excited young fellow knocked a billiard-ball across the table, and then laughed, and looked at his elder kinsman.

"A la bonne heure! We are cold to the stranger within and without our gates. We don't take Mr. Harry

[1] This matter is discussed in the Author's previous work, "The Memoirs of Colonel Esmond."

Warrington into our arms, and cry when we see our cousin. We don't cry when he goes away—but do we pretend?"

"No, you don't. But you try to get the better of him in a bet," says Harry, indignantly.

"Is there no such practice in Virginia, and don't sporting men there try to overreach one another? What was that story I heard you telling our aunt, of the British officers and Tom Somebody of Spotsylvania?"

"That's fair!" cries Harry. "That is, it's usual practice, and a stranger must look out. I don't mind the parson; if he wins, he may have, and welcome. But a relation! To think that my own blood cousin wants money out of me!"

"A Newmarket man would get the better of his father. My brother has been on the turf since he rode over to it from Cambridge. If you play at cards with him—and he will if you will let him—he will beat you if he can."

"Well, I'm ready," cries Harry. "I'll play any game with him that I know, or I'll jump with him, or I'll ride with him, or I'll row with him, or I'll wrestle with him, or I'll shoot with him—there now."

The senior was greatly entertained, and held out his hand to the boy. "Anything, but don't fight with him," said my lord.

"If I do, I'll whip him! hanged if I don't!" cried the lad. But a look of surprise and displeasure on the nobleman's part recalled him to better sentiments. "A hundred pardons, my lord!" he said, blushing very red, and seizing his cousin's hand. "I talked of ill manners, being angry and hurt just now; but 'tis doubly ill mannered of me to show my anger, and boast about my

prowess to my own host and kinsman. It's not the practice with us Americans to boast, believe me, it's not."

"You are the first I ever met," says my lord, with a smile, "and I take you at your word. And I give you fair warning about the cards, and the betting, that is all, my boy."

"Leave a Virginian alone! We are a match for most men, we are," resumed the boy.

Lord Castlewood did not laugh. His eyebrows only arched for a moment, and his grey eyes turned towards the ground. "So you can bet fifty guineas and afford to lose them? So much the better for you, cousin. Those great Virginian estates yield a great revenue, do they?"

"More than sufficient for all of us—for ten times as many as we are now," replied Harry. ("What, *he* is pumping me," thought the lad.)

"And your mother makes her son and heir a handsome allowance?"

"As much as ever I choose to draw, my lord!" cried Harry.

"Peste! I wish I had such a mother!" cried my lord. "But I have only the advantage of a step-mother, and she draws on me. There is the dinner-bell. Shall we go into the eating-room?" And taking his young friend's arm, my lord led him to the apartment where that meal was waiting.

Parson Sampson formed the delight of the entertainment, and amused the ladies with a hundred agreeable stories. Besides being chaplain to his lordship, he was a preacher in London, at the new chapel in May Fair, for which my Lady Whittlesea (so well known in the reign of George I.) had left an endowment. He had the choicest stories of all the clubs and coteries—

the very latest news of who had run away with whom—the last bon-mot of Mr. Selwyn—the last wild bet of March and Rockingham. He knew how the old king had quarrelled with Madame Walmoden, and the Duke

was suspected of having a new love; who was in favour at Carlton House with the Princess of Wales; and who was hung last Monday, and how well he behaved in the cart. My lord's chaplain poured out all this intelligence to the amused ladies and the delighted young provincial, seasoning his conversation with such plain terms and lively jokes as made Harry stare, who was newly arrived from the colonies, and unused to the ele-

gancies of London life. The ladies, old and young, laughed quite cheerfully at the lively jokes. Do not be frightened, ye fair readers of the present day! We are not going to outrage your sweet modesties, or call blushes on your maiden cheeks. But 'tis certain that their ladyships at Castlewood never once thought of being shocked, but sat listening to the parson's funny tales until the chapel bell, clinking for afternoon service, summoned his reverence away for half-an-hour. There was no sermon. He would be back in the drinking of a bottle of Burgundy. Mr. Will called a fresh one, and the chaplain tossed off a glass ere he ran out.

Ere the half-hour was over, Mr. Chaplain was back again bawling for another bottle. This discussed, they joined the ladies, and a couple of card-tables were set out, as, indeed, they were for many hours every day, at which the whole of the family party engaged. Madame de Bernstein could beat any one of her kinsfolk at picquet, and there was only Mr. Chaplain in the whole circle who was at all a match for her ladyship.

In this easy manner the Sabbath day passed. The evening was beautiful, and there was talk of adjourning to a cool tankard and a game of whist in a summer-house; but the company voted to sit in doors, the ladies declaring they thought the aspect of three honours in their hand, and some good court cards, more beautiful than the loveliest scene of nature; and so the sun went behind the elms, and still they were at their cards; and the rooks came home cawing their even song, and they never stirred except to change partners; and the chapel clock tolled hour after hour unheeded, so delightfully were they spent over the pasteboard; and the moon and stars came out; and it was nine o'clock, and the

groom of the chambers announced that supper was ready.

Whilst they sat at that meal, the postboy's twanging horn was heard, as he trotted into the village with his letter-bag. My lord's bag was brought in presently from the village, and his letters, which he put aside, and his newspaper, which he read. He smiled as he came to a paragraph, looked at his Virginian cousin, and handed the paper over to his brother Will, who by this time was very comfortable, having had pretty good luck all the evening, and a great deal of liquor.

"Read that, Will," says my lord.

Mr. William took the paper, and, reading the sentence pointed out by his brother, uttered an exclamation which caused all the ladies to cry out.

"Gracious heavens, William! What has happened?" cries one or the other fond sister.

"Mercy, child, why do you swear so dreadfully?" asks the young man's fond mamma.

"What's the matter?" inquires Madame de Bernstein, who has fallen into a doze after her usual modicum of punch and beer.

"Read it, Parson!" says Mr. William, thrusting the paper over to the chaplain, and looking as fierce as a Turk.

"Bit, by the Lord!" roars the chaplain, dashing down the paper.

"Cousin Harry, you are in luck," said my lord, taking up the sheet, and reading from it. "The Six Year Old Plate at Huntingdon was won by Jason, beating Brilliant, Pytho, and Ginger. The odds were five to four on Brilliant against the field, three to one against Jason, seven to two against Pytho, and twenty to one against Ginger."

"I owe you a half-year's income of my poor living, Mr. Warrington," groaned the parson. "I will pay when my noble patron settles with me."

"A curse upon the luck!" growls Mr. William; "that comes of betting on a Sunday,"—and he sought consolation in another great bumper.

"Nay, Cousin Will. It was but in jest," cried Harry. "I can't think of taking my cousin's money."

"Curse me, sir, do you suppose, if I lose, I can't pay?" asks Mr. William; "and that I want to be beholden to any man alive? That is a good joke. Isn't it, Parson?"

"I think I have heard better," said the clergyman; to which William replied, "Hang it, let us have another bowl."

Let us hope the ladies did not wait for this last replenishment of liquor, for it is certain they had had plenty already during the evening.

CHAPTER XVI

IN WHICH GUMBO SHOWS SKILL WITH THE OLD ENGLISH WEAPON

OUR young Virginian having won these sums of money from his cousin and the chaplain, was in duty bound to give them a chance of recovering their money, and I am afraid his mamma and other sound moralists would scarcely approve of his way of life. He played at cards a great deal too much. Besides the daily whist or quadrille with the ladies, which set in soon after dinner at three o'clock, and lasted until supper time, there occurred games involving the gain or loss of very considerable sums of money, in which all the gentlemen, my lord included, took part. Since their Sunday's conversation, his lordship was more free and confidential with his kinsman than he had previously been, betted with him quite affably, and engaged him at backgammon and picquet. Mr. William and the pious chaplain liked a little hazard; though this diversion was enjoyed on the sly, and unknown to the ladies of the house, who had exacted repeated promises from Cousin Will, that he would not lead the Virginian into mischief, and that he would himself keep out of it.

So Will promised as much as his aunt or his mother chose to demand from him, gave them his word that he would never play—no, never; and when the family retired to rest, Mr. Will would walk over with a dice-box and a rum-bottle to Cousin Harry's quarters, where he, and Hal, and his reverence would sit and play until daylight.

When Harry gave to Lord Castlewood those flourishing descriptions of the maternal estate in America, he had not wished to mislead his kinsman, or to boast, or to tell falsehoods, for the lad was of a very honest and truth-telling nature; but, in his life at home, it must be owned that the young fellow had had acquaintance with all sorts of queer company,—horse-jockeys, tavern loungers, gambling and sporting men, of whom a great number were found in his native colony. A landed aristocracy, with a population of negroes to work their fields, and cultivate their tobacco and corn, had little other way of amusement than in the hunting-field, or over the cards and the punch-bowl. The hospitality of the province was unbounded: every man's house was his neighbour's; and the idle gentlefolks rode from one mansion to another, finding in each pretty much the same sport—welcome, and rough plenty. The Virginian Squire had often a bare-footed valet, and a cobbled saddle; but there was plenty of corn for the horses, and abundance of drink and venison for the master within the tumble-down fences, and behind the cracked windows of the hall. Harry had slept on many a straw mattress, and engaged in endless jolly night-bouts over claret and punch in cracked bowls till morning came, and it was time to follow the hounds. His poor brother was of a much more sober sort, as the lad owned with contrition. So it is

that Nature makes folks; and some love books and tea, and some like Burgundy and a gallop across country. Our young fellow's tastes were speedily made visible to his friends in England. None of them were partial to the Puritan discipline; nor did they like Harry the worse for not being the least of a milksop. Manners, you see, were looser a hundred years ago; tongues were vastly more free and easy; names were named, and things were done, which we should screech now to hear mentioned. Yes, Madam, we are not as our ancestors were. Ought we not to thank the Fates that have improved our morals so prodigiously, and made us so eminently virtuous?

So, keeping a shrewd keen eye upon people round about him, and fancying, not incorrectly, that his cousins were disposed to pump him, Harry Warrington had thought fit to keep his own counsel regarding his own affairs, and in all games of chance or matters of sport was quite a match for the three gentlemen into whose company he had fallen. Even in the noble game of billiards he could hold his own after a few days' play with his cousins and their revered pastor. His grandfather loved the game, and had over from Europe one of the very few tables which existed in his Majesty's province of Virginia. Nor though Mr. Will could beat him at the commencement, could he get undue odds out of the young gamester. After their first bet, Harry was on his guard with Mr. Will, and cousin William owned, not without respect, that the American was his match in most things, and his better in many. But though Harry played so well that he could beat the parson, and soon was the equal of Will, who of course could beat both the girls, how came it, that in the contests with

these, especially with one of them, Mr. Warrington frequently came off second? He was profoundly courteous to every being who wore a petticoat: nor has that traditional politeness yet left his country. All the women of the Castlewood establishment loved the young gentleman. The grim housekeeper was mollified by him: the fat cook greeted him with blowsy smiles; the ladies'-maids, whether of the French or the English nation, smirked and giggled in his behalf; the pretty porter's daughter at the lodge had always a kind word in reply to his. Madame de Bernstein took note of all these things, and, though she said nothing, watched carefully the boy's disposition and behaviour.

Who can say how old Lady Maria Esmond was? Books of the Peerage were not so many in those days as they are in our blessed times, and I cannot tell to a few years, or even a lustre or two. When Will used to say she was five-and-thirty, he was abusive, and, besides, was always given to exaggeration. Maria was Will's half sister. She and my lord were children of the late Lord Castlewood's first wife, a German lady, whom, 'tis known, my lord married in the time of Queen Anne's wars. Baron Bernstein, who married Maria's Aunt Beatrix, Bishop Tusher's widow, was also a German, a Hanoverian nobleman, and relative of the first Lady Castlewood. If my Lady Maria was born under George I., and his Majesty George II. had been thirty years on the throne, how could she be seven-and-twenty, as she told Harry Warrington she was? "I am old, child," she used to say. She used to call Harry "child" when they were alone. "I am a hundred years old. I am seven-and-twenty. I might be your mother almost." To which Harry would reply, "Your ladyship might

be the mother of all the cupids, I am sure. You don't look twenty, on my word you do not!"

Lady Maria looked any age you liked. She was a fair beauty with a dazzling white and red complexion, an abundance of fair hair which flowed over her shoulders, and beautiful round arms which showed to uncommon advantage when she played at billiards with Cousin Harry. When she had to stretch across the table to make a stroke, that youth caught glimpses of a little ankle, a little clocked stocking, and a little black satin slipper with a little red heel, which filled him with unutterable rapture, and made him swear that there never was such a foot, ankle, clocked stocking, satin slipper in the world. And yet, O you foolish Harry! your mother's foot was ever so much more slender, and half an inch shorter, than Lady Maria's. But, somehow, boys do not look at their mammas' slippers and ankles with rapture.

No doubt Lady Maria was very kind to Harry when they were alone. Before her sister, aunt, stepmother, she made light of him, calling him a simpleton, a chit, and who knows what trivial names? Behind his back, and even before his face, she mimicked his accent, which smacked somewhat of his province. Harry blushed and corrected the faulty intonation, under his English monitresses. His aunt pronounced that they would soon make him a pretty fellow.

Lord Castlewood, we have said, became daily more familiar and friendly with his guest and relative. Till the crops were off the ground there was no sporting, except an occasional cock-match at Winchester, and a bull-baiting at Hexton Fair. Harry and Will rode off to many jolly fairs and races round about: the young

Virginian was presented to some of the county families—the Henleys of the Grange, the Crawleys of Queen's Crawley, the Redmaynes of Lionsden, and so forth. The neighbours came in their great heavy coaches, and passed two or three days in country fashion. More of them would have come, but for the fear all the Castlewood family had of offending Madame de Bernstein. She did not like country company; the rustical society and conversation annoyed her. "We shall be merrier when my aunt leaves us," the young folks owned. "We have cause, as you may imagine, for being very civil to her. You know what a favourite she was with our papa? And with reason. She got him his earldom, being very well indeed at court at that time with the King and Queen. She commands here naturally, perhaps a little too much. We are all afraid of her: even my elder brother stands in awe of her, and my stepmother is much more obedient to her than she ever was to my papa, whom she ruled with a rod of iron. But Castlewood is merrier when our aunt is not here. At least we have much more company. You will come to us in our gay days, Harry, won't you? Of course you will: this is your home, sir. I was so pleased—oh, so pleased—when my brother said he considered it was your home!"

A soft hand is held out after this pretty speech, a pair of very well-preserved blue eyes look exceedingly friendly. Harry grasps his cousin's hand with ardour. I do not know what privilege of cousinship he would not like to claim, only he is so timid. They call the English selfish and cold. He at first thought his relatives were so: but how mistaken he was! How kind and affectionate they are, especially the Earl, and dear, dear Maria! How he wishes he could recall that letter which

he had written to Mrs. Mountain and his mother, in which he hinted that his welcome had been a cold one! The Earl his cousin was everything that was kind, had promised to introduce him to London society, and present him at Court, and at White's. He was to consider Castlewood as his English home. He had been most hasty in his judgment regarding his relatives in Hampshire. All this, with many contrite expressions, he wrote in his second despatch to Virginia. And he added, for it hath been hinted that the young gentleman did not spell at this early time with especial accuracy, "My cousin, the Lady Maria, is a perfect *Angle.*"

"*Ille præter omnes angulus ridet,*" muttered little Mr. Dempster, at home in Virginia.

"The child can't be falling in love with his angle, as he calls her!" cries out Mountain.

"Pooh, pooh! my niece Maria is forty!" says Madam Esmond. "I perfectly well recollect her when I was at home—a great gawky carroty creature, with a foot like a pair of bellows." Where is truth, forsooth, and who knoweth it? Is Beauty beautiful, or is it only our eyes that make it so? Does Venus squint? Has she got a splay-foot, red hair, and a crooked back? Anoint my eyes, good Fairy Puck, so that I may ever consider the Beloved Object a paragon! Above all, keep on anointing my mistress's dainty peepers with the very strongest ointment, so that my noddle may ever appear lovely to her, and that she may continue to crown my honest ears with fresh roses!

Now, not only was Harry Warrington a favourite with some in the drawing-room, and all the ladies of the servants'-hall, but, like master like man, his valet Gumbo was very much admired and respected by very

Gumbo Astonishes the
Servants' Hall

many of the domestic circle. Gumbo had a hundred accomplishments. He was famous as a fisherman, huntsman, blacksmith. He could dress hair beautifully, and improved himself in the art under my lord's own Swiss gentleman. He was great at cooking many of his Virginian dishes, and learned many new culinary secrets from my lord's French man. We have heard how exquisitely and melodiously he sang at church; and he sang not only sacred but secular music, often inventing airs and composing rude words after the habit of his people. He played the fiddle so charmingly, that he set all the girls dancing in Castlewood hall, and was ever welcome to a gratis mug of ale at the "Three Castles" in the village, if he would but bring his fiddle with him. He was good-natured and loved to play for the village children: so that Mr. Warrington's negro was a universal favourite in all the Castlewood domain.

Now it was not difficult for the servants'-hall folks to perceive that Mr. Gumbo was a liar, which fact was undoubted in spite of all his good qualities. For instance, that day at church, when he pretended to read out of Molly's psalm-book, he sang quite other words than those which were down in the book, of which he could not decipher a syllable. And he pretended to understand music, whereupon the Swiss valet brought him some, and Master Gumbo turned the page upside down. These instances of long-bow practice daily occurred, and were patent to all the Castlewood household. They knew Gumbo was a liar, perhaps not thinking the worse of him for this weakness; but they did not know how great a liar he was, and believed him much more than they had any reason for doing, and because, I suppose, they liked to believe him.

Whatever might be his feelings of wonder and envy on first viewing the splendour and comforts of Castlewood, Mr. Gumbo kept his sentiments to himself and examined the place, park, appointments, stables, very coolly. The horses, he said, were very well, what there were of them; but at Castlewood in Virginia they had six times as many, and let me see, fourteen eighteen grooms to look after them. Madam Esmond's carriages were much finer than my lord's,—great deal more gold on the panels. As for her gardens, they covered acres, and they grew every kind of flower and fruit under the sun. Pine-apples and peaches? Pine-apples and peaches were so common, they were given to pigs in his country. They had twenty forty gardeners, not white gardeners, all black gentlemen, like hisself. In the house were twenty forty gentlemen in livery, besides women-servants,—never could remember how many women-servants,—dere were so many: tink dere were fifty women-servants,—all Madam Esmond's property, and worth ever so many hundred pieces of eight apiece. How much was a piece of eight? Bigger than a guinea, a piece of eight was. Tink, Madam Esmond have twenty thirty thousand guineas a year,—have whole rooms full of gold and plate. Come to England in one of her ships; have ever so many ships, Gumbo can't count how many ships; and estates, covered all over with tobacco and negroes, and reaching out for a week's journey. Was Master Harry heir to all this property? Of course, now Master George was killed and scalped by the Indians. Gumbo had killed ever so many Indians, and tried to save Master George, but he was Master Harry's boy,—and Master Harry was as rich,—oh, as rich as ever he like. He wore black now, because Mas-

ter George was dead; but you should see his chests full of gold clothes, and lace, and jewels at Bristol. Of course, Master Harry was the richest man in all Virginia, and might have twenty sixty servants; only he liked travelling with one best, and that one, it need scarcely be said, was Gumbo.

This story was not invented at once, but gradually elicited from Mr. Gumbo, who might have uttered some trifling contradictions during the progress of the narrative, but by the time he had told his tale twice or thrice in the servants'-hall or the butler's private apartment, he was pretty perfect and consistent in his part, and knew accurately the number of slaves Madam Esmond kept, and the amount of income which she enjoyed. The truth is, that as four or five blacks are required to do the work of one white man, the domestics in American establishments are much more numerous than in ours; and like the houses of most other Virginian landed proprietors, Madam Esmond's mansion and stables swarmed with negroes.

Mr. Gumbo's account of his mistress's wealth and splendour was carried to my lord by his lordship's man, and to Madame de Bernstein and my ladies by their respective waiting-women, and, we may be sure, lost nothing in the telling. A young gentleman in England is not the less liked because he is reputed to be the heir to vast wealth and possessions; when Lady Castlewood came to hear of Harry's prodigious expectations, she repented of her first cool reception of him, and of having pinched her daughter's arm till it was black and blue for having been extended towards the youth in too friendly a manner. Was it too late to have him back into those fair arms? Lady Fanny was welcome to try, and re-

sumed the dancing-lessons. The Countess would play the music with all her heart. But, how provoking! that odious, sentimental Maria would always insist upon being in the room; and, as sure as Fanny walked in the gardens or the park, so sure would her sister come trailing after her. As for Madame de Bernstein, she laughed, and was amused at the stories of the prodigious fortune of her Virginian relatives. She knew her half-sister's man of business in London, and very likely was aware of the real state of Madam Esmond's money matters; but she did not contradict the rumours which Gumbo and his fellow-servants had set afloat; and was not a little diverted by the effect which these reports had upon the behaviour of the Castlewood family towards their young kinsman.

"Hang him! Is he so rich, Molly?" said my lord to his elder sister. "Then good-by to our chances with your aunt. The Baroness will be sure to leave him all her money to spite us, and because he doesn't want it. Nevertheless, the lad is a good lad enough, and it is not his fault, being rich, you know."

"He is very simple and modest in his habits for one so wealthy," remarks Maria.

"Rich people often are so," says my lord. "If I were rich, I often think I would be the greatest miser, and live in rags and on a crust. Depend on it there is no pleasure so enduring as money-getting. It grows on you, and increases with old age. But because I am as poor as Lazarus, I dress in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day."

Maria went to the book-room and got the "History of Virginia, by R. B. Gent"—and read therein what an admirable climate it was, and how all kinds of fruit and

corn grew in that province, and what noble rivers were those of Potomac and Rappahannoc, abounding in all sorts of fish. And she wondered whether the climate would agree with her, and whether her aunt would like her. And Harry was sure his mother would adore her, so would Mountain. And when he was asked about the number of his mother's servants, he said, they certainly had more servants than are seen in England—he did not know how many. But the negroes did not do near as much work as English servants did: hence the necessity of keeping so great a number. As for some others of Gumbo's details which were brought to him, he laughed and said the boy was wonderful as a romancer, and in telling such stories he supposed was trying to speak out for the honour of the family.

So Harry was modest as well as rich! His denials only served to confirm his relatives' opinion regarding his splendid expectations. More and more the Countess and the ladies were friendly and affectionate with him. More and more Mr. Will betted with him, and wanted to sell him bargains. Harry's simple dress and equipage only served to confirm his friends' idea of his wealth. To see a young man of his rank and means with but one servant, and without horses or a carriage of his own—what modesty! When he went to London he would cut a better figure? Of course he would. Castlewood would introduce him to the best society in the capital, and he would appear as he ought to appear at St. James's. No man could be more pleasant, wicked, lively, obsequious than the worthy chaplain, Mr. Sampson. How proud he would be if he could show his young friend a little of London life!—if he could warn rogues off him, and keep him out of the way of harm! Mr. Sampson was

very kind: everybody was very kind. Harry liked quite well the respect that was paid to him. As Madam Esmond's son he thought perhaps it was his due: and took for granted that he was the personage which his family imagined him to be. How should he know better, who had never as yet seen any place but his own province, and why should he not respect his own condition when other people respected it so? So all the little knot of people at Castlewood House, and from these the people in Castlewood village, and from thence the people in the whole county, chose to imagine that Mr. Harry Esmond Warrington was the heir of immense wealth, and a gentleman of very great importance, because his negro valet told lies about him in the servants'-hall.

Harry's aunt, Madame de Bernstein, after a week or two, began to tire of Castlewood and the inhabitants of that mansion, and the neighbours who came to visit them. This clever woman tired of most things and people sooner or later. So she took to nodding and sleeping over the chaplain's stories, and to doze at her whist and over her dinner, and to be very snappish and sarcastic in her conversation with her Esmond nephews and nieces, hitting out blows at my lord and his brother the jockey, and my ladies, widowed and unmarried, who winced under her scornful remarks, and bore them as they best might. The cook, whom she had so praised on first coming, now gave her no satisfaction; the wine was corked; the house was damp, dreary, and full of draughts; the doors would not shut, and the chimneys were smoky. She began to think the Tunbridge waters were very necessary for her, and ordered the doctor, who came to her from the neighbouring town of Hexton, to order those waters for her benefit.

"I wish to heaven she would go!" growled my lord, who was the most independent member of his family. "She may go to Tunbridge, or she may go to Bath, or she may go to Jericho for me."

"Shall Fanny and I come with you to Tunbridge, dear Baroness?" asked Lady Castlewood of her sister-in-law.

"Not for worlds, my dear! The doctor orders me absolute quiet, and if you came I should have the knocker going all day, and Fanny's lovers would never be out of the house," answered the Baroness, who was quite weary of Lady Castlewood's company.

"I wish I could be of any service to my aunt!" said the sentimental Lady Maria, demurely.

"My good child, what can you do for me? You cannot play picquet so well as my maid, and I have heard all your songs till I am perfectly tired of them! One of the gentlemen might go with me: at least make the journey, and see me safe from highwaymen."

"I'm sure, Ma'am, I shall be glad to ride with you," said Mr. Will.

"Oh, not you! I don't want *you,* William," cried the young man's aunt. "Why do not *you* offer, and where are your American manners, you ungracious Harry Warrington? Don't swear, Will. Harry is much better company than you are, and much better *ton,* too, sir."

"Tong, indeed! Confound his tong," growled envious Will to himself.

"I dare say I shall be tired of him, as I am of other folks," continued the Baroness. "I have scarcely seen Harry at all in these last days. You shall ride with me to Tunbridge, Harry!"

At this direct appeal, and to no one's wonder more than that of his aunt, Mr. Harry Warrington blushed, and hemmed and ha'd: and at length said, "I have promised my cousin Castlewood to go over to Hexton Petty Sessions with him to-morrow. He thinks I should see how the Courts here are conducted—and—the partridge shooting will soon begin, and I have promised to be here for that, Ma'am." Saying which words, Harry Warrington looked as red as a poppy, whilst Lady Maria held her meek face downwards, and nimbly plied her needle.

"You actually refuse to go with me to Tunbridge Wells?" called out Madame Bernstein, her eyes lightening, and her face flushing up with anger, too.

"Not to ride with you, Ma'am; that I will do with all my heart; but to stay there—I have promised . . . ."

"Enough, enough, sir! I can go alone, and don't want your escort," cried the irate old lady, and rustled out of the room.

The Castlewood family looked at each other with wonder. Will whistled. Lady Castlewood glanced at Fanny, as much as to say, *His* chance is over. Lady Maria never lifted up her eyes from her tambour-frame.

CHAPTER XVII

ON THE SCENT

YOUNG Harry Warrington's act of revolt came so suddenly upon Madame de Bernstein, that she had no other way of replying to it, than by the prompt outbreak of anger with which we left her in the last chapter. She darted two fierce glances at Lady Fanny and her mother as she quitted the room. Lady Maria over her tambour-frame escaped without the least notice, and scarcely lifted up her head from her embroidery, to watch the aunt retreating, or the looks which mamma-in-law and sister threw at one another.

"So, in spite of all, you *have*, Madam?" the maternal looks seemed to say.

"Have what?" asked Lady Fanny's eyes. But what

good in looking innocent? She looked puzzled. She did not look one-tenth part as innocent as Maria. Had she been guilty, she would have looked not guilty much more cleverly; and would have taken care to study and compose a face so as to be ready to suit the plea. Whatever was the expression of Fanny's eyes, mamma glared on her as if she would have liked to tear them out.

But Lady Castlewood could not operate upon the said eyes then and there, like the barbarous monsters in the stage-direction in King Lear. When her ladyship was going to tear out her daughter's eyes, she would retire smiling, with an arm round her dear child's waist, and then gouge her in private.

"So you don't fancy going with the old lady to Tunbridge Wells?" was all she said to Cousin Warrington, wearing at the same time a perfectly well-bred simper on her face.

"And small blame to our cousin!" interposed my lord. (The face over the tambour-frame looked up for one instant.) "A young fellow must not have it all idling and holiday. Let him mix up something useful with his pleasures, and go to the fiddles and pump-rooms at Tunbridge or the Bath later. Mr. Warrington has to conduct a great estate in America: let him see how ours in England are carried on. Will hath shown him the kennel and the stables; and the games in vogue, which I think, cousin, you seem to play as well as your teachers. After harvest we will show him a little English fowling and shooting: in winter we will take him out a-hunting. Though there has been a coolness between us and our aunt-kinswoman in Virginia, yet we are of the same blood. Ere we send our cousin back to his mother, let us show him what an English gentleman's life at home is.

I should like to read with him as well as sport with him, and that is why I have been pressing him of late to stay and bear me company."

My lord spoke with such perfect frankness that his mother-in-law and half-brother and sister could not help wondering what his meaning could be. The three last-named persons often held little conspiracies together, and caballed or grumbled against the head of the house. When he adopted that frank tone, there was no fathoming his meaning; often it would not be discovered until months had passed. He did not say, "This is true," but "I mean that this statement should be accepted and believed in my family." It was then a thing *convenue,* that my Lord Castlewood had a laudable desire to cultivate the domestic affections and to educate, amuse, and improve his young relative; and that he had taken a great fancy to the lad, and wished that Harry should stay for some time near his lordship.

"What is Castlewood's game now?" asked William of his mother and sister as they disappeared into the corridors. "Stop! By George, I have it!"

"What, William?"

"He intends to get him to play, and to win the Virginia estate back from him. That's what it is!"

"But the lad has not got the Virginia estate to pay, if he loses," remarks mamma.

"If my brother has not some scheme in view, may I be—"

"Hush! Of course he has a scheme in view. But what is it?"

"He can't mean Maria—Maria is as old as Harry's mother," muses Mr. William.

"Pooh! with her old face and sandy hair and freckled

skin! Impossible!" cries Lady Fanny, with somewhat of a sigh.

"Of course, your ladyship had a fancy for the Iroquois, too!" cried mamma.

"I trust I know my station and duty better, Madam! If I had liked him, that is no reason why I should marry him. Your ladyship hath taught me as much as that."

"My Lady Fanny!"

"I am sure you married our papa without liking him. You have told me so a thousand times!"

"And if you did not love our father before marriage, you certainly did not fall in love with him afterwards," broke in Mr. William, with a laugh. "Fan and I remember how our honoured parents used to fight. Don't us, Fan? And our brother Esmond kept the peace."

"Don't recall those dreadful low scenes, William!" cries mamma. "When your father took too much drink, he was like a madman; and his conduct should be a warning to you, sir, who are fond of the same horrible practice."

"I am sure, Madam, *you* were not much the happier for marrying the man you did not like, and your ladyship's title hath brought very little along with it," whimpered out Lady Fanny. "What is the use of a coronet with the jointure of a tradesman's wife?—how many of them are richer than we are? There is come lately to live in our Square, at Kensington, a grocer's widow from London Bridge, whose daughters have three gowns where I have one; and who, though they are waited on but by a man and a couple of maids, I know eat and drink a thousand times better than we do, with our scraps of cold meat on our plate, and our great flaunting, trapesing, impudent, lazy lacqueys!"

"He! he! glad I dine at the palace, and not at home!" said Mr. Will. (Mr. Will, through his aunt's interest with Count Puffendorff, Groom of the Royal (and Serene Electoral) Powder-Closet, had one of the many small places at Court, that of Deputy Powder.)

"Why should I not be happy without any title except my own?" continued Lady Frances. "Many people are. I dare say they are even happy in America."

"Yes! with a mother-in-law who is a perfect Turk and Tartar, for all I hear—with Indian war-whoops howling all around you: and with a danger of losing your scalp, or of being eat up by a wild beast every time you went to church."

"I wouldn't go to church," said Lady Fanny.

"You'd go with anybody who asked you, Fan!" roared out Mr. Will: "and so would old Maria, and so would any woman, that's the fact." And Will laughed at his own wit.

"Pray, good folks, what is all your merriment about?" here asked Madame Bernstein, peeping in on her relatives from the tapestried door which led into the gallery where their conversation was held.

Will told her that his mother and sister had been having a fight (which was not a novelty, as Madame Bernstein knew), because Fanny wanted to marry their cousin, the wild Indian, and my lady countess would not let her. Fanny protested against this statement. Since the very first day when her mother had told her not to speak to the young gentleman, she had scarcely exchanged two words with him. She knew her station better. *She* did not want to be scalped by wild Indians, or eat up by bears.

Madame de Bernstein looked puzzled. "If he is not

staying for you, for whom is he staying?" she asked. "At the houses to which he has been carried, you have taken care not to show him a woman that is not a fright or in the nursery; and I think the boy is too proud to fall in love with a dairymaid, Will."

"Humph! That is a matter of taste, ma'am," says Mr. William, with a shrug of his shoulders.

"Of Mr. William Esmond's taste, as you say; but not of yonder boy's. The Esmonds of his grandfather's nurture, sir, would not go a-courting in the kitchen."

"Well, ma'am, every man to his taste, I say again. A fellow might go farther and fare worse than my brother's servants'-hall, and besides Fan, there's only the maids or old Maria to choose from."

"Maria! Impossible!" And yet, as she spoke the very words, a sudden thought crossed Madame Bernstein's mind, that this elderly Calypso might have captivated her young Telemachus. She called to mind half-a-dozen instances in her own experience of young men who had been infatuated by old women. She remembered how frequent Harry Warrington's absences had been of late—absences which she attributed to his love for field-sports. She remembered how often, when he was absent, Maria Esmond was away too. Walks in cool avenues, whisperings in garden temples, or behind clipt hedges, casual squeezes of the hand in twilight corridors, or sweet glances and ogles in meetings on the stairs,—a lively fancy, an intimate knowledge of the world, very likely a considerable personal experience in early days, suggested all these possibilities and chances to Madame de Bernstein, just as she was saying that they were impossible.

"Impossible, ma'am! I don't know," Will continued. "My mother warned Fan off him."

"Oh, your mother *did* warn Fanny off?"

"Certainly, my dear Baroness!"

"Didn't she? Didn't she pinch Fanny's arm black and blue? Didn't they fight about it?"

"Nonsense, William! For shame, William!" cry both the implicated ladies in a breath.

"And now, since we have heard how rich he is, perhaps it is sour grapes, that is all. And now, since he is warned off the young bird, perhaps he is hunting the old one, that's all. Impossible! why impossible? You know old Lady Suffolk, ma'am?"

"William, how can you speak about Lady Suffolk to your aunt?"

A grin passed over the countenance of the young gentleman. "Because Lady Suffolk was a special favourite at Court? Well, other folks have succeeded her."

"Sir!" cries Madame de Bernstein, who may have had her reasons to take offence.

"So they have, I say; or who, pray, is my Lady Yarmouth now! And didn't old Lady Suffolk go and fall in love with George Berkeley, and marry him when she was ever so old? Nay, ma'am, if I remember right—and we hear a deal of town-talk at our table—Harry Estridge went mad about your ladyship when you were somewhat rising twenty; and would have changed your name a third time if you would but have let him."

This allusion to an adventure of her own later days, which was, indeed, pretty notorious to all the world, did not anger Madame de Bernstein like Will's former hint about his aunt having been a favourite at George the Second's Court; but, on the contrary, set her in good humour.

"*Au fait,*" she said, musing, as she played a pretty little hand on the table, and no doubt thinking about mad

young Harry Estridge; "'tis not impossible, William, that old folks and young folks, too, should play the fool."

"But I can't understand a young fellow being in love with Maria," continued Mr. William, "however he might be with *you,* ma'am. That's *oter shose,* as our French tutor used to say. You remember the Count ma'am; he, he!—and so does Maria!"

"William!"

"And I dare say the Count remembers the bastinado Castlewood had given to him. A confounded French dancing-master calling himself a count, and daring to fall in love in our family! Whenever I want to make myself uncommonly agreeable to old Maria, I just say a few words of *parly voo* to her. *She* knows what I mean."

"Have you abused her to your cousin, Harry Warrington?" asked Madame de Bernstein.

"Well—I know she is always abusing me—and I *have* said my mind about her," said Will.

"O you idiot!" cried the old lady. "Who but a gaby ever spoke ill of a woman to her sweetheart? He will tell her everything, and they both will hate you."

"The very thing, ma'am!" cried Will, bursting into a great laugh. "I had a sort of suspicion, you see, and two days ago, as we were riding together, I told Harry Warrington a bit of my mind about Maria;—why shouldn't I, I say? She is always abusing me, ain't she, Fan? And your favourite turned as red as my plush waistcoat—wondered how a gentleman could malign his own flesh and blood, and, trembling all over with rage, said I was no true Esmond."

"Why didn't you chastise him, sir, as my lord did the dancing-master?" cried Lady Castlewood.

"Well, mother,—you see that at quarter-staff there's two sticks used," replied Mr. William; "and my opinion is, that Harry Warrington can guard his own head uncommonly well. Perhaps that is one of the reasons why I did not offer to treat my cousin to a caning. And now you say so, ma'am, I know he has told Maria. She has been looking battle, murder, and sudden death at me ever since. All which shows—" and here he turned to his aunt.

"All which shows what?"

"That I think we are on the right scent; and that we've found Maria—the old fox!" And the ingenuous youth here clapped his hand to his mouth, and gave a loud halloo.

How far had this pretty intrigue gone? now was the question. Mr. Will said, that at her age, Maria would be for conducting matters as rapidly as possible, not having much time to lose. There was not a great deal of love lost between Will and his half-sister.

Who would sift the matter to the bottom? Scolding one party or the other was of no avail. Threats only serve to aggravate people in such cases. "I never was in danger but once, young people," said Madame de Bernstein, "and I think that was because my poor mother contradicted me. If this boy is like others of his family, the more we oppose him, the more *entêté* he will be; and we shall never get him out of his scrape."

"Faith, ma'am, suppose we leave him in it?" grumbled Will. "Old Maria and I don't love each other too much, I grant you; but an English earl's daughter is good enough for an American tobacco-planter, when all is said and done."

Here his mother and sister broke out. They would

not hear of such a union. To which Will answered, "You are like the dog in the manger. You don't want the man yourself, Fanny—"

"*I* want him, indeed!" cries Lady Fanny, with a toss of her head.

"Then why grudge him to Maria? I think Castlewood wants her to have him."

"Why grudge him to Maria, sir?" cried Madame de Bernstein, with great energy. "Do you remember who the poor boy is, and what your house owes to his family? His grandfather was the best friend your father ever had, and gave up this estate, this title, this very castle, in which you are conspiring against the friendless Virginian lad, that you and yours might profit by it. And the reward for all this kindness is, that you all but shut the door on the child when he knocks at it, and talk of marrying him to a silly elderly creature, who might be his mother! He *shan't* marry her."

"The very thing we were saying and thinking, my dear Baroness!" interposes Lady Castlewood. "*Our* part of the family is not eager about the match, though my lord and Maria may be."

"You will like him for yourself, now that you hear he is rich—and may be richer, young people, mind you that," cried Madam Beatrix, turning upon the other women.

"Mr. Warrington may be ever so rich, madam, but there is no need why your ladyship should perpetually remind us that we are poor," broke in Lady Castlewood, with some spirit. "At least there is very little disparity in Fanny's age and Mr. Harry's; and you surely will be the last to say that a lady of our name and family is

not good enough for any gentleman born in Virginia or elsewhere."

"Let Fanny take an English gentleman, countess, not an American. With such a name and such a mother to help her, and with all her good looks and accomplishments, sure she can't fail of finding a man worthy of her. But from what I know about the daughters of this house, and what I imagine about our young cousin, I am certain that no happy match could be made between them."

"*What* does my aunt know about me?" asked Lady Fanny, turning very red.

"Only your temper, my dear. You don't suppose that I believe all the tittle-tattle and scandal which one cannot help hearing in town? But the temper and early education are sufficient. Only fancy one of you condemned to leave St. James's and the Mall, and live in a plantation surrounded by savages! You would die of ennui, or worry your husband's life out with your ill humour. You are born, ladies, to ornament courts—not wigwams. Let this lad go back to his wilderness with a wife who is suited to him."

The other two ladies declared in a breath that, for their parts, they desired no better, and, after a few more words, went on their way, while Madame de Bernstein, lifting up her tapestried door, retired into her own chamber. She saw all the scheme now; she admired the ways of women, calling a score of little circumstances back to mind. She wondered at her own blindness during the last few days, and that she should not have perceived the rise and progress of this queer little intrigue. How far had it gone? was now the question. Was Harry's passion of the serious and tragical sort, or a mere fire of straw which a day or two would burn out? How deeply

was he committed? She dreaded the strength of Harry's passion, and the weakness of Maria's. A woman of her age is so desperate, Madame Bernstein may have thought, that she will make any efforts to secure a lover. Scandal, bah! She will retire and be a princess in Virginia, and leave the folks in England to talk as much scandal as they choose.

Is there always, then, one thing which women do not tell to one another, and about which they agree to deceive each other? Does the concealment arise from deceit or modesty? A man, as soon as he feels an inclination for one of the other sex, seeks for a friend of his own to whom he may impart the delightful intelligence. A woman (with more or less skill) buries her secret away from her kind. For days and weeks past, had not this old Maria made fools of the whole house,—Maria the butt of the family?

I forbear to go into too curious inquiries regarding the Lady Maria's antecedents. I have my own opinion about Madame Bernstein's. A hundred years ago people of the great world were not so strait-laced as they are now, when everybody is good, pure, moral, modest; when there is no skeleton in anybody's closet; when there is no scheming; no slurring over of old stories; when no girl tries to sell herself for wealth and no mother abets her. Suppose my Lady Maria tries to make her little game, wherein is her ladyship's great eccentricity?

On these points no doubt the Baroness de Bernstein thought, as she communed with herself in her private apartment.

CHAPTER XVIII

AN OLD STORY

AS my Lady Castlewood and her son and daughter passed through one door of the saloon where they had all been seated, my lord Castlewood departed by another issue; and then the demure eyes looked up from the tambour-frame on which they had persisted hitherto in examining the innocent violets and jonquils. The eyes looked up at Harry Warrington, who stood at an ancestral portrait under the great fire-place. He had gathered a great heap of blushes (those flowers which bloom so rarely after gentlefolks' spring-time), and with them ornamented his honest countenance, his cheeks, his forehead, nay, his youthful ears.

"Why did you refuse to go with our aunt, cousin?" asked the lady of the tambour-frame.

"Because your ladyship bade me stay," answered the lad.

"*I* bid you stay! La! child! What one says in fun,

you take in earnest! Are all you Virginian gentlemen so obsequious as to fancy every idle word a lady says is a command? Virginia must be a pleasant country for our sex if it be so!"

"You said—when—when we walked in the terrace two nights since,—Oh heaven!" cried Harry, with a voice trembling with emotion.

"Ah, that sweet night, cousin!" cries the Tambour-frame.

"Whe—whe—when you gave me this rose from your own neck"—roared out Harry, pulling suddenly a crumpled and decayed vegetable from his waistcoat—"which I will never part with—with, no, by heavens, whilst this heart continues to beat! You said, 'Harry, if your aunt asks you to go away, you will go, and if you go, you will forget me.'—*Didn't* you say so?"

"All men forget!" said the Virgin, with a sigh.

"In this cold selfish country they may, cousin, not in ours," continues Harry, yet in the same state of exaltation—"I had rather have lost an arm almost than refused the old lady. I tell you it went to my heart to say no to her, and she so kind to me, and who had been the means of introducing me to—to—oh, heaven!" . . . (Here a kick to an intervening spaniel, which flies yelping from before the fire, and a rapid advance on the tambour-frame.) "Look here, cousin! If you were to bid me jump out of yonder window, I should do it; or murder, I should do it."

"La! but you need not squeeze one's hand so, you silly child!" remarks Maria.

"I can't help it—we are so in the south. Where my heart is, I can't help speaking my mind out, cousin—and *you* know where that heart is! Ever since that

Gather ye Rosebuds
while ye may

evening—that—Oh heaven! I tell you I have hardly slept since—I want to do something—to distinguish myself—to be ever so great. I wish there was Giants, Maria, as I have read of in—in books, that I could go and fight 'em. I wish you was in distress, that I might help you, somehow. I wish you wanted my blood, that I might spend every drop of it for you. And when you told me not to go with Madam Bernstein . . ."

"*I* tell thee, child? never."

"I thought you told me. You said you knew I preferred my aunt to my cousin, and I said then what I say now, 'Incomparable Maria! I prefer thee to all the women in the world and all the angels in Paradise—and I would go anywhere, were it to dungeons, if you ordered me!' And do you think I would not stay anywhere, when you only desired that I should be near you?" he added, after a moment's pause.

"Men always talk in that way—that is,—that is, I have heard so," said the spinster, correcting herself; "for what should a country-bred woman know about you creatures? When you are near us, they say you are all raptures and flames and promises and I don't know what; when you are away, you forget all about us."

"But I think I never want to go away as long as I live," groaned out the young man. "I have tired of many things; not books and that, I never cared for study much, but games and sports which I used to be fond of when I was a boy. Before I saw you, it was to be a soldier I most desired; I tore my hair with rage when my poor dear brother went away instead of me on that expedition in which we lost him. But now, I only care for one thing in the world, and you know what that is."

"You silly child! don't you know I am almost old enough to be . . . . ?"

"I know—I know! but what is that to me? Hasn't your br . . .—well, never mind who, some of 'em—told me stories against you, and didn't they show me the Family Bible, where all your names are down, and the dates of your birth?"

"The cowards! Who did that?" cried out Lady Maria. "Dear Harry, tell me who did that? Was it my mother-in-law, the grasping, odious, abandoned, brazen harpy? Do you know all about her? How she married my father in his cups—the horrid hussey!—and . . . ."

"Indeed it wasn't Lady Castlewood," interposed the wondering Harry.

"Then it was my aunt," continued the infuriate lady. "A pretty moralist, indeed! A Bishop's widow, forsooth, and I should like to know whose widow before and afterwards. Why, Harry, she intrigued with the Pretender, and with the Court of Hanover, and, I dare say, would with the Court of Rome and the Sultan of Turkey if she had had the means. Do you know who her second husband was? A creature who . . . ."

"But our aunt never spoke a word against you," broke in Harry, more and more amazed at the nymph's vehemence.

She checked her anger. In the inquisitive countenance opposite to her she thought she read some alarm as to the temper which she was exhibiting.

"Well, well! I am a fool," she said. "I want thee to think well of me, Harry!"

A hand is somehow put out and seized and, no doubt,

kissed by the rapturous youth. "Angel!" he cries, looking into her face with his eager, honest eyes.

Two fish-pools irradiated by a pair of stars would not kindle to greater warmth than did those elderly orbs into which Harry poured his gaze. Nevertheless, he plunged into their blue depths, and fancied he saw heaven in their calm brightness. So that silly dog (of whom Æsop or the Spelling-book used to tell us in youth) beheld a beef-bone in the pond, and snapped at it, and lost the beef-bone he was carrying. Oh, absurd cur! He saw the beef-bone in his own mouth reflected in the treacherous pool, which dimpled, I dare say, with ever so many smiles, coolly sucked up the meat, and returned to its usual placidity. Ah! what a heap of wreck lie beneath some of those quiet surfaces! What treasures we have dropped into them! What chased golden dishes, what precious jewels of love, what bones after bones, and sweetest heart's flesh! Do not some *very* faithful and unlucky dogs jump in bodily, when they are swallowed up heads and tails entirely? When some women come to be *dragged,* it is a marvel what will be found in the depths of them. *Cavete, canes!* Have a care how ye lap that water. What do they want with us, the mischievous siren sluts? A green-eyed Naiad never rests until she has inveigled a fellow under water; she sings after him, she dances after him; she winds round him, glittering tortuously; she warbles and whispers dainty secrets at his cheek, she kisses his feet, she leers at him from out of her rushes: all her beds sigh out, "Come, sweet youth! Hither, hither, rosy Hylas!" Pop goes Hylas. (Surely the fable is renewed for ever and ever?) Has his captivator any pleasure? Doth she take any account of him? No more than a fisherman landing at Brighton

does of one out of a hundred thousand herrings. . . . The last time Ulysses rowed by the Sirens' bank, he and his men did not care though a whole shoal of them were singing and combing their longest locks. Young Telemachus was for jumping overboard; but the tough old crew held the silly, bawling lad. They were deaf, and could not hear his bawling nor the sea-nymphs' singing. They were dim of sight, and did not see how lovely the witches were. The stale, old, leering witches! Away with ye! I dare say you have painted your cheeks by this time; your wretched old songs are as out of fashion as Mozart, and it is all false hair you are combing!

In the last sentence you see Lector Benevolus and Scriptor Doctissimus figure as tough old Ulysses and his tough old Boatswain, who do not care a quid of tobacco for any Siren at Sirens' Point; but Harry Warrington is green Telemachus, who, be sure, was very unlike the soft youth in the good Bishop of Cambray's twaddling story. *He* does not see that the siren paints the lashes from under which she ogles him; will put by into a box when she has done the ringlets into which she would inveigle him; and if she eats him, as she proposes to do, will crunch his bones with a new set of grinders just from the dentist's, and warranted for mastication. The song is not stale to Harry Warrington, nor the voice cracked or out of tune that sings it. But—but—Oh, dear me, Brother Boatswain! Don't you remember how pleasant the opera was when we first heard it? *Cosi fan tutti* was its name—Mozart's music. Now, I dare say, they have other words, and other music, and other singers and fiddlers, and another great crowd in the pit. Well, well, *Cosi fan tutti* is still upon the bills, and they are going on singing it over and over and over.

Any man or woman with a pennyworth of brains, or the like precious amount of personal experience, or who has read a novel before, must, when Harry pulled out those faded vegetables just now, have gone off into a digression of his own, as the writer confesses for himself he was diverging whilst he has been writing the last brace of paragraphs. If he sees a pair of lovers whispering in a garden alley or the embrasure of a window, or a pair of glances shot across the room from Jenny to the artless Jessamy, he falls to musing on former days when, &c. &c. These things follow each other by a general law, which is not as old as the hills, to be sure, but as old as the people who walk up and down them. When, I say, a lad pulls a bunch of amputated and now decomposing greens from his breast and falls to kissing it, what is the use of saying much more? As well tell the market-gardener's name from whom the slip-rose was bought—the waterings, clippings, trimmings, manurings, the plant has undergone—as tell how Harry Warrington came by it. *Rose, elle a vécu ce que vivent les roses,* has been trimmed, has been watered, has been potted, has been sticked, has been cut, worn, given away, transferred to yonder boy's pocket-book and bosom, according to the laws and fate appertaining to roses.

And how came Maria to give it to Harry? And how did he come to want it and to prize it so passionately when he got the bit of rubbish? Is not one story as stale as the other? Are not they all alike? What is the use, I say, of telling them over and over? Harry values that rose because Maria has ogled him in the old way; because she has happened to meet him in the garden in the old way; because he has taken her hand in the old

way; because they have whispered to one another behind the old curtain (the gaping old rag, as if everybody could not peep through it!); because, in this delicious weather, they have happened to be early risers and go into the park; because dear Goody Jenkins in the village happened to have a bad knee, and my Lady Maria went to read to her, and gave her calves'-foot jelly, and because somebody, of course, must carry the basket. Whole chapters might have been written to chronicle all these circumstances, but *à quoi bon?* The incidents of life, and love-making especially, I believe to resemble each other so much, that I am surprised, gentlemen and ladies, you read novels any more. Psha! Of course that rose in young Harry's pocket-book had grown, and had budded, and had bloomed, and was now rotting, like other roses. I suppose you will want me to say that the young fool kissed it next? Of course he kissed it. What were lips made for, pray, but for smiling and simpering, and (possibly) humbugging, and kissing, and opening to receive mutton-chops, cigars, and so forth. I cannot write this part of the story of our Virginians, because Harry did not dare to write it himself to anybody at home, because, if he wrote any letters to Maria (which, of course, he did, as they were in the same house, and might meet each other as much as they liked), they were destroyed; because he afterwards chose to be very silent about the story, and we can't have it from her ladyship, who never told the truth about anything. But *cui bono?* I say again. What is the good of telling the story? My gentle reader, take your story: take mine. To-morrow it shall be Miss Fanny's, who is just walking away with her doll to the school-room and the governess (poor victim! she has a version of it in her desk): and next

day it shall be Baby's, who is bawling out on the stairs for his bottle.

Maria might like to have and exercise power over the young Virginian; but she did not want that Harry should quarrel with his aunt for her sake, or that Madame de Bernstein should be angry with her. Harry was not the Lord of Virginia yet: he was only the Prince, and the Queen might marry and have other Princes, and the laws of primogeniture might not be established in Virginia, *qu'en savait elle?* My lord her brother and she had exchanged no words at all about the delicate business. But they understood each other, and the Earl had a way of understanding things without speaking. He knew his Maria perfectly well: in the course of a life of which not a little had been spent in her brother's company and under his roof, Maria's disposition, ways, tricks, faults, had come to be perfectly understood by the head of the family: and she would find her little schemes checked or aided by him, as to his lordship seemed good, and without need of any words between them. Thus three days before, when she happened to be going to see that poor dear old Goody, who was ill with the sore knee in the village (and when Harry Warrington happened to be walking behind the elms on the green too), my lord with his dogs about him, and his gardener walking after him, crossed the court, just as Lady Maria was tripping to the gate-house—and his lordship called his sister, and said: "Molly, you are going to see Goody Jenkins. You are a charitable soul, my dear. Give Gammer Jenkins this half-crown for me—unless our cousin, Warrington, has already given her money. A pleasant walk to you. Let her want for nothing." And at supper, my lord asked Mr. Warring-

ton many questions about the poor in Virginia, and the means of maintaining them, to which the young gentleman gave the best answers he might. His lordship wished that in the old country there were no more poor people than in the new: and recommended Harry to visit the poor and people of every degree, indeed high and low—in the country to look at the agriculture, in the city at the manufactures and municipal institutions—to which edifying advice Harry acceded with becoming modesty and few words, and Madame Bernstein nodded approval over her picquet with the chaplain. Next day, Harry was in my lord's justice-room: the next day he was out ever so long with my lord on the farm—and coming home, what does my lord do, but look in on a sick tenant? I think Lady Maria was out on that day, too; she had been reading good books to that poor dear Goody Jenkins, though I don't suppose Madame Bernstein ever thought of asking about her niece.

"*Castlewood, Hampshire, England, August* 5, 1757.

"My dear Mountain,—At first, as I wrote, I did not like Castlewood, nor my cousins there, *very much*. Now, I am used to *their ways*, and we begin to understand each other *much better*. With my duty to my mother, tell her, I hope, that considering her ladyship's great kindness to me, Madam Esmond will be reconciled to her half-sister, the Baroness de Bernstein. The Baroness, you know, was my Grandmamma's daughter by her first husband, Lord Castlewood (only Grandpapa really was the *real* Lord); however, that was not his, that is the other Lord Castlewood's fault you know, and he was *very* kind to Grandpapa, who always spoke most kindly of him to us *as you know*.

"Madame the Baroness Bernstein first married a clergyman, Reverend Mr. Tusher, who was so *learned and good*, and such

A Ministering Angel

a favourite of his Majesty, as was my aunt, too, that he was made a *Bishopp*. When he died, *Our gracious King* continued his friendship to my aunt; who married a Hanoverian nobleman, who occupied a post at the Court—and I believe left the Baroness *very rich*. My cousin, my Lord Castlewood, told me so much about her, and I am sure *I* have found from her the greatest kindness and affection.

"The (Dowiger) Countess Castlewood and my cousins Will and Lady Fanny have been described per last, that went by the Falmouth packet on the 20th ult. The ladies are not changed *since then*. Me and Cousin Will are very good friends. We have rode out a good deal. We have had some famous cocking matches at Hampton and Winton. My cousin is a *sharp blade*, but I think I have shown him that we in Virginia know a thing or two. Reverend Mr. Sampson, chaplain of the famaly, *most excellent preacher, without any biggatry*.

"The kindness of my cousin the Earl improves every day, and by next year's ship I hope my mother will send his lordship some of our best roll tobacco (for tennants) and *hamms*. He is most *charatable* to the poor. His sister, Lady Maria, *equally so*. She sits for hours reading *good books to the sick:* she is most beloved in the village."

"Nonsense!" said a lady to whom Harry submitted his precious manuscript. "Why do you flatter me, cousin?"

"You *are* beloved in the village and out of it," said Harry, with a knowing emphasis, "and I have flattered you, as you call it, a little more still, further on."

"There is a sick old woman there, whom Madam Esmond would like, a most *raligious*, good, old lady.

"Lady Maria goes very often to read to her; which, she says, gives her comfort. But though her Ladyship hath the sweetest voice, *both in speaking and singeing* (she plays the church

organ, and singes there *most beautifully*), I cannot think Gammer Jenkins can have any comfort from it, being very deaf, by reason of her great age. She has her memory perfectly, however, and remembers when my honoured Grandmother Rachel Lady Castlewood lived here. She says, my Grandmother was the best woman in the whole world, gave her a cow when she was married, and cured her husband, Gaffer Jenkins, of the *collects*, which he used to have very bad. I suppose it was with the Pills and Drops which my honoured Mother put up in my boxes, when I left dear Virginia. Having never been ill since, have had no use for the pills. Gumbo hath, eating and drinking a great deal too much in the Servants' Hall. The next angel to my Grandmother (N. B. I think I spelt *angel* wrong per last), Gammer Jenkins says, is Lady Maria, who sends her duty to her Aunt in Virginia, and remembers her, and my Grandpapa and Grandmama when they were in Europe, and she was a little girl. You know they have Grandpapa's picture here, and I live in the very rooms which he had, and which are to be called mine, my Lord Castlewood says.

"Having no more to say, at present, I close with the best love and duty to my honoured Mother, and with respects to Mr. Dempster, and a kiss for Fanny, and kind remembrances to Old Gumbo, Nathan, Old and Young Dinah, and the pointer dog and Slut, and all friends, from their well-wisher

"HENRY ESMOND WARRINGTON.

"Have wrote and sent my duty to my Uncle Warrington in Norfolk. No *anser* as yet."

"I hope the spelling is right, cousin?" asked the author of the letter, from the critic to whom he showed it.

"'Tis quite well enough spelt for any person of fashion," answered Lady Maria, who did not choose to be examined too closely regarding the orthography.

"One word, 'Angel,' I know, I spelt wrong in writing

to my mamma, but I have learned a way of spelling it right now."

"And how is that, sir?"

"I think 'tis by looking at you, cousin;" saying which words, Mr. Harry made her ladyship a low bow, and accompanied the bow by one of his best blushes, as if he were offering her a bow and a bouquet.

CHAPTER XIX

CONTAINING BOTH LOVE AND LUCK

AT the next meal, when the family party assembled, there was not a trace of displeasure in Madame de Bernstein's countenance, and her behaviour to all the company, Harry included, was perfectly kind and cordial. She praised the cook this time, declared the fricassée was excellent, and that there were no eels anywhere like those in the Castlewood moats; would not allow that the wine was corked, or hear of such extravagance as opening a fresh bottle for a useless old woman like her; gave Madam Esmond Warrington, of Virginia, as her toast, when the new wine was brought, and hoped Harry had brought away his mamma's permission to take back an English wife with him. He did not remember his grandmother; her, Madame de Bernstein's, dear mother? The Baroness amused the company with numerous stories of her mother, of her beauty and goodness, of her happiness with her second husband, though the wife was so much

older than Colonel Esmond. To see them together, was delightful, she had heard. Their attachment was celebrated all through the country. To talk of disparity in marriages was vain after that. My Lady Castlewood and her two children held their peace whilst Madame Bernstein prattled. Harry was enraptured, and Maria surprised. Lord Castlewood was puzzled to know what sudden freak or scheme had occasioned this prodigious amiability on the part of his aunt; but did not allow the slightest expression or solicitude or doubt to appear on his countenance, which wore every mark of the most perfect satisfaction.

The Baroness's good-humour infected the whole family; not one person at table escaped a gracious word from her. In reply to some compliment to Mr. Will, when that artless youth uttered an expression of satisfaction and surprise at his aunt's behaviour, she frankly said: "Complimentary, my dear! Of course I am. I want to make up with you for having been exceedingly rude to everybody this morning. When I was a child, and my father and mother were alive, and lived here, I remember I used to adopt exactly the same behaviour. If I had been naughty in the morning, I used to try and coax my parents at night. I remember in this very room, at this very table—oh, ever so many hundred years ago!—so coaxing my father, and mother, and your grandfather, Harry Esmond; and there were eels for supper, as we have had them to-night, and it was that dish of collared eels which brought the circumstance back to my mind. I had been just as wayward that day, when I was seven years old, as I am to-day, when I am seventy, and so I confess my sins, and ask to be forgiven, like a good girl."

"I absolve your ladyship," cried the chaplain, who made one of the party.

"But your reverence does not know how cross and ill-tempered I was. I scolded my sister, Castlewood: I scolded her children, I boxed Harry Esmond's ears: and all because he would not go with me to Tunbridge Wells."

"But I will go, madam; I will ride with you with all the pleasure in life," said Mr. Warrington.

"You see, Mr. Chaplain, what good, dutiful children they all are. 'Twas I alone who was cross and peevish. Oh, it was cruel of me to treat them so! Maria, I ask your pardon, my dear."

"Sure, madam, you have done me no wrong," says Maria, to the humble suppliant.

"Indeed, I have, a very great wrong, child! Because I was weary of myself, I told you that your company would be wearisome to me. You offered to come with me to Tunbridge, and I rudely refused you."

"Nay, ma'am, if you were sick, and my presence annoyed you . . ."

"But it will not annoy me! You were most kind to say you would come. I do, of all things, beg, pray, entreat, implore, command that you will come."

My lord filled himself a glass, and sipped it. Most utterly unconscious did his lordship look. *This,* then, was the meaning of the previous comedy.

"Anything which can give my aunt pleasure, I am sure, will delight me," said Maria, trying to look as happy as possible.

"You must come and stay with me, my dear, and I promise to be good and good-humoured. My dear lord, you will spare your sister to me?"

"Lady Maria Esmond is quite of age to judge for herself about such a matter," said his lordship, with a bow. "If any of us can be of use to you, madam, you sure ought to command us." Which sentence, being interpreted, no doubt meant, "Plague take the old woman! She is taking Maria away in order to separate her from this young Virginian."

"Oh, Tunbridge will be delightful!" sighed Lady Maria.

"Mr. Sampson will go and see Goody Jones for you," my lord continued.

Harry drew pictures with his finger on the table. What delights had he not been speculating on? What walks, what rides, what interminable conversations, what delicious shrubberies and sweet sequestered summer-houses, what poring over music-books, what moonlight, what billing and cooing, had he not imagined! Yes, the day was coming. They were all departing—my Lady Castlewood to her friends, Madame Bernstein to her waters—and he was to be left alone with his divine charmer—alone with her and unutterable rapture! The thought of the pleasure was maddening. That these people were all going away. That he was to be left to enjoy that heaven—to sit at the feet of that angel and kiss the hem of that white robe. O gods! 'twas too great bliss to be real! "I knew it couldn't be," thought poor Harry. "I knew something would happen to take her from me."

"But you will ride with us to Tunbridge, nephew Warrington, and keep us from the highwaymen?" said Madame de Bernstein.

Harry Warrington hoped the company did not see how red he grew. He tried to keep his voice calm and

without tremor. Yes, he would ride with their ladyships, and he was sure they need fear no danger. Danger! Harry felt he would rather like danger than not. He would slay ten thousand highwaymen if they approached his mistress's coach. At least, he would ride by that coach, and now and again see her eyes at the window. He might not speak to her; but he should be near her. He should press the blessed hand at the inn at night, and feel it reposing on his as he led her to the carriage at morning. They would be two whole days going to Tunbridge, and one day or two he might stay there. Is not the poor wretch who is left for execution at Newgate thankful for even two or three days of respite?

You see, we have only indicated, we have not chosen to describe, at length, Mr. Harry Warrington's condition, or that utter depth of imbecility into which the poor young wretch was now plunged. Some boys have the complaint of love favourably and gently. Others, when they get the fever, are sick unto death with it; or, recovering, carry the marks of the malady down with them to the grave, or to remotest old age. I say, it is not fair to take down a young fellow's words when he is raging in that delirium. Suppose he is in love with a woman twice as old as himself, have we not all read of the young gentleman who committed suicide in consequence of his fatal passion for Mademoiselle Ninon de l'Enclos who turned out to be his grandmother? Suppose thou art making an ass of thyself, young Harry Warrington, of Virginia! are there not people in England who heehaw too? Kick and abuse him, you who have never brayed; but bear with him, all honest fellow-cardophagi: long-eared messmates, recognise a brother donkey!

"You will stay with us for a day or two at the Wells,"

Madame Bernstein continued. "You will see us put into our lodgings. Then you can return to Castlewood and the partridge-shooting, and all the fine things which you and my lord are to study together."

Harry bowed an acquiescence. A whole week of heaven! Life was not altogether a blank, then.

"And as there is sure to be plenty of company at the Wells, I shall be able to present you," the lady graciously added.

"Company! ah! I shan't need company," sighed out Harry. "I mean that I shall be quite contented in the company of you two ladies," he added, eagerly; and no doubt Mr. Will wondered at his cousin's taste.

As this was to be the last night of Cousin Harry's present visit to Castlewood, Cousin Will suggested that he, and his Reverence, and Warrington should meet at the quarters of the latter and make up accounts, to which process, Harry, being a considerable winner in his play transactions with the two gentlemen, had no objection. Accordingly, when the ladies retired for the night, and my lord withdrew—as his custom was—to his own apartments, the three gentlemen all found themselves assembled in Mr. Harry's little room before the punch-bowl, which was Will's usual midnight companion.

But Will's method of settling accounts was by producing a couple of fresh packs of cards, and offering to submit Harry's debt to the process of being doubled or acquitted. The poor chaplain had no more ready cash than Lord Castlewood's younger brother. Harry Warrington wanted to win the money of neither. Would he give pain to the brother of his adored Maria, or allow any one of her near kinsfolk to tax him with any want of generosity or forbearance? He was ready to give them their

revenge, as the gentlemen proposed. Up to midnight he would play with them for what stakes they chose to name. And so they set to work, and the dice-box was rattled and the cards shuffled and dealt.

Very likely he did not think about the cards at all. Very likely he was thinking:—"At this moment, my beloved one is sitting with her beauteous golden locks outspread under the fingers of her maid. Happy maid! Now she is on her knees, the sainted creature, addressing prayers to that heaven which is the abode of angels like her. Now she has sunk to rest behind her damask curtains. O bless, bless her!" "You double us all round? I will take a card upon each of my two. Thank you, that will do—a ten—now, upon the other, a queen,—two natural vingt-et-uns, and as you doubled us you owe me so and so."

I imagine volleys of oaths from Mr. William, and brisk pattering of imprecations from his Reverence, at the young Virginian's luck. He won because he did not want to win. Fortune, that notoriously coquettish jade, came to him, because he was thinking of another nymph, who possibly was as fickle. Will and the chaplain may have played against him, solicitous constantly to increase their stakes, and supposing that the wealthy Virginian wished to let them recover all their losings. But this was by no means Harry Warrington's notion. When he was at home he had taken a part in scores of such games as these (whereby we may be led to suppose that he kept many little circumstances of his life mum from his lady mother), and had learned to play and pay. And as he practised fair play towards his friends he expected it from them in return.

"The luck does seem to be with me, cousin," he said, in reply to some more oaths and growls of Will, "and

I am sure I do not want to press it; but you don't suppose I am going to be such a fool as to fling it away altogether? I have quite a heap of your promises on paper by this time. If we are to go on playing, let us have the dollars on the table, if you please; or, if not the money, the worth of it."

"Always the way with you rich men," grumbled Will. "Never lend except on security—always win because you are rich."

"Faith, cousin, you have been of late for ever flinging my riches into my face. I have enough for my wants and for my creditors."

"Oh, that we could all say as much," groaned the chaplain. "How happy we, and how happy the duns would be! What have we got to play against our conqueror? There is my new gown, Mr. Warrington. Will you set me five pieces against it? I have but to preach in stuff if I lose. Stop! I have a 'Chrysostom,' a 'Fox's Martyrs,' a 'Baker's Chronicle,' and a cow and her calf. What shall we set against these?"

"I will bet one of Cousin Will's notes for twenty pounds," cried Mr. Warrington, producing one of those documents.

"Or I have my black mare, and will back her not against your honour's notes of hand, but against ready money."

"I have my horse. I will back my horse against you for fifty!" bawls out Will.

Harry took the offers of both gentlemen. In the course of ten minutes the horse and the black mare had both changed owners. Cousin William swore more fiercely than ever. The parson dashed his wig to the ground, and emulated his pupil in the loudness of his

objurgations. Mr. Harry Warrington was quite calm, and not the least elated by his triumphs. They had asked him to play, and he had played. He knew he should win. Oh beloved slumbering angel! he thought, am I not sure of victory when *you* are kind to me? He was looking out from his window towards the casement on the opposite side of the court, which he knew to be hers. He had forgot about his victims and their groans, and ill luck, ere they crossed the court. Under yonder brilliant flickering star, behind yonder casement where the lamp was burning faintly, was his joy, and heart, and treasure.

CHAPTER XX

FACILIS DESCENSUS

WHILST the good old Bishop of Cambray, in his romance lately mentioned, described the disconsolate condition of Calypso at the departure of Ulysses, I forget whether he mentioned the grief of Calypso's lady's-maid on taking leave of Odysseus's own gentleman. The menials must have wept together in the kitchen precincts whilst the master and mistress took a last wild embrace in the drawing-room; they must have hung round each other in the fore-cabin, whilst their principals broke their hearts in the grand-saloon. When the bell rang for the last time, and Ulysses's mate bawled, "Now! any one for shore!" Calypso and her female attendant must have both walked over the same plank, with beating hearts and streaming eyes; both must have waved pocket-handkerchiefs (of far different value and texture), as they stood on the quay, to their friends on the departing vessel, whilst the people on the land and the crew crowding in the ship's bows shouted, Hip, hip, huzzay (or whatever may be the equivalent Greek for the salutation) to all engaged on

that voyage. But the point to be remembered is, that if Calypso *ne pouvait se consoler,* Calypso's maid *ne pouvait se consoler non plus.* They had to walk the same plank of grief, and feel the same pang of separation; on their return home, they might not use pocket-handkerchiefs of the same texture and value, but the tears, no doubt, were as salt and plentiful which one shed in her marble halls, and the other poured forth in the servants' ditto.

Not only did Harry Warrington leave Castlewood a victim to love, but Gumbo quitted the same premises a prey to the same delightful passion. His wit, accomplishments, good-humour, his skill in dancing, cookery, and music, had endeared him to the whole female domestic circle. More than one of the men might be jealous of him, but the ladies all were with him. There was no such objection to the poor black men then in England as has obtained since among white-skinned people. Theirs was a condition not perhaps of equality, but they had a sufferance and a certain grotesque sympathy from all; and from women, no doubt, a kindness much more generous. When Ledyard and Park, in Blackmansland, were persecuted by the men, did they not find the black women pitiful and kind to them? Women are always kind towards our sex. What (mental) negroes do they not cherish? what (moral) hunchbacks do they not adore? what lepers, what idiots, what dull drivellers, what misshapen monsters (I speak figuratively) do they not fondle and cuddle? Gumbo was treated by the women as kindly as many people no better than himself: it was only the men in the servants'-hall who rejoiced at the Virginian lad's departure. I should like to see him taking leave. I should like to

see Molly, housemaid, stealing to the terrace-gardens in the grey dawning to cull a wistful posy. I should like to see Betty, kitchenmaid, cutting off a thick lock of her chestnut ringlets which she proposed to exchange for a woolly token from young Gumbo's pate. Of course he said he was *regum progenies,* a descendant of Ashantee kings. In Caffraria, Connaught, and other places now inhabited by hereditary bondsmen, there must have been vast numbers of these potent sovereigns in former times, to judge from their descendants now extant.

At the morning announced for Madame de Bernstein's departure, all the numerous domestics of Castlewood crowded about the doors and passages, some to have a last glimpse of her ladyship's men and the fascinating Gumbo, some to take leave of her ladyship's maid, all to waylay the Baroness and her nephew for parting fees, which it was the custom of that day largely to distribute among household servants. One and the other gave liberal gratuities to the liveried society, to the gentlemen in black and ruffles, and to the swarm of female attendants. Castlewood was the home of the Baroness's youth, and as for her honest Harry, who had not only lived at free charges in the house, but had won horses and money—or promises of money—from his cousin and the unlucky chaplain, he was naturally of a generous turn, and felt that at this moment he ought not to stint his benevolent disposition. "My mother, I know," he thought, "will wish me to be liberal to all the retainers of the Esmond family." So he scattered about his gold pieces to right and left, and as if he had been as rich as Gumbo announced him to be. There was no one who came near him but had a share in his bounty.

From the major-domo to the shoe-black, Mr. Harry had a peace-offering for them all. To the grim housekeeper in her still room, to the feeble old porter in his lodge he distributed some token of his remembrance. When a man is in love with one woman in a family, it is astonishing how fond he becomes of every person connected with it. He ingratiates himself with the maids; he is bland with the butler; he interests himself about the footman; he runs on errands for the daughters; he gives advice and lends money to the young son at college; he pats little dogs which he would kick otherwise; he smiles at old stories which would make him break out in yawns, were they uttered by any one but papa; he drinks sweet port wine for which he would curse the steward and the whole committee of a club; he bears even with the cantankerous old maiden aunt; he beats time when darling little Fanny performs her piece on the piano; and smiles when wicked, lively little Bobby upsets the coffee over his shirt.

Harry Warrington, in his way, and according to the customs of that age, had for a brief time past (by which I conclude that only for a brief time had his love been declared and accepted) given to the Castlewood family all these artless testimonies of his affection for one of them. Cousin Will should have won back his money and welcome, or have won as much of Harry's own as the lad could spare. Nevertheless, the lad, though a lover, was shrewd, keen, and fond of sport and fair play, and a judge of a good horse when he saw one. Having played for and won all the money which Will had, besides a great number of Mr. Esmond's valuable autographs, Harry was very well pleased to win Will's brown horse—that very quadruped which had nearly

pushed him into the water on the first evening of his arrival at Castlewood. He had seen the horse's performance often, and, in the midst of all his passion and romance, was not sorry to be possessed of such a sound, swift, well-bred hunter and roadster. When he had gazed at the stars sufficiently as they shone over his mistress's window, and put her candle to bed, he repaired to his own dormitory, and there, no doubt, thought of his Maria and his horse with youthful satisfaction, and how sweet it would be to have one pillioned on the other, and to make the tour of all the island on such an animal with such a pair of white arms round his waist. He fell asleep ruminating on these things, and meditating a million of blessings on his Maria, in whose company he was to luxuriate at least for a week more.

In the early morning poor Chaplain Sampson sent over his little black mare by the hands of his groom, footman, and gardener, who wept and bestowed a great number of kisses on the beast's white nose as he handed him over to Gumbo. Gumbo and his master were both affected by the fellow's sensibility; the negro servant showing his sympathy by weeping, and Harry by producing a couple of guineas, with which he astonished and speedily comforted the chaplain's boy. Then Gumbo and the late groom led the beast away to the stable, having commands to bring him round with Mr. William's horse after breakfast, at the hour when Madame Bernstein's carriages were ordered.

So courteous was he to his aunt, or so grateful for her departure, that the master of the house even made his appearance at the morning meal, in order to take leave of his guests. The ladies and the chaplain were present —the only member of the family absent was Will: who,

however, left a note for his cousin, in which Will stated, in exceedingly bad spelling, that he was obliged to go away to Salisbury races that morning, but that he had left the horse which his cousin won last night, and which Tom, Mr. Will's groom, would hand over to Mr. Warrington's servant. Will's absence did not prevent the rest of the party from drinking a dish of tea amicably, and in due time the carriages rolled into the courtyard, the servants packed them with the Baroness's multiplied luggage, and the moment of departure arrived.

A large open landau contained the stout Baroness and her niece; a couple of men-servants mounting on the box before them with pistols and blunderbusses ready in event of a meeting with highwaymen. In another carriage were their ladyships' maids, and another servant in guard of the trunks, which, vast and numerous as they were, were as nothing compared to the enormous baggage-train accompanying a lady of the present time. Mr. Warrington's modest valises were placed in this second carriage under the maids' guardianship, and Mr. Gumbo proposed to ride by the window for the chief part of the journey.

My lord, with his step-mother and Lady Fanny, accompanied their kinswoman to the carriage-steps, and bade her farewell with many dutiful embraces. The Lady Maria followed in a riding-dress, which Harry Warrington thought the most becoming costume in the world. A host of servants stood around, and begged heaven bless her ladyship. The Baroness's departure was known in the village, and scores of the folks there stood waiting under the trees outside the gates, and huzzayed and waved their hats as the ponderous vehicles rolled away.

Gumbo was gone for Mr. Warrington's horses, as my lord, with his arm under his young guest's, paced up and down the court. "I hear you carry away some of our horses out of Castlewood?" my lord said.

Harry blushed. "A gentleman cannot refuse a fair game at the cards," he said. "I never wanted to play, nor would have played for money had not my cousin William forced me. As for the chaplain, it went to my heart to win from him, but he was as eager as my cousin!"

"I know—I know! There is no blame to you, my boy. At Rome you can't help doing as Rome does; and I am very glad that you have been able to give Will a lesson. He is mad about play—would gamble his coat off his back—and I and the family have had to pay his debts ever so many times. May I ask how much you have won of him?"

"Well, some eighteen pieces the first day or two, and his note for a hundred and twenty more, and the brown horse, fifty—that makes nigh upon two hundred. But, you know, cousin, all was fair, and it was even against my will that we played at all. Will ain't a match for me, my lord—that is the fact. Indeed he is not."

"He is a match for most people, though," said my lord. "His brown horse, I think you said?"

"Yes. His brown horse—Prince William, out of Constitution. You don't suppose I would set him fifty against his bay, my lord?"

"Oh, I didn't know. I saw Will riding out this morning, most likely I did not remark what horse he was on. And you won the black mare from the parson?"

"For fourteen. He will mount Gumbo very well.

Why does not the rascal come round with the horses?" Harry's mind was away to lovely Maria. He longed to be trotting by her side.

"When you get to Tunbridge, Cousin Harry, you must be on the look-out against sharper players than the chaplain and Will. There is all sorts of queer company at the Wells."

"A Virginian learns pretty early to take care of himself, my lord," says Harry, with a knowing nod.

"So it seems! I recommend my sister to thee, Harry. Although she is not a baby in years, she is as innocent as one. Thou wilt see that she comes to no mischief?"

"I will guard her with my life, my lord!" cries Harry.

"Thou art a brave fellow. By the way, cousin, unless you are very fond of Castlewood, I would in your case not be in a great hurry to return to this lonely, tumble-down old house. I want myself to go to another place I have, and shall scarce be back here till the partridge-shooting. Go you and take charge of the women, of my sister and the Baroness, will you?"

"Indeed I will," said Harry, his heart beating with happiness at the thought.

"And I will write thee word when you shall bring my sister back to me. Here come the horses. Have you bid adieu to the countess and Lady Fanny? They are kissing their hands to you from the music-room balcony."

Harry ran up to bid these ladies a farewell. He made that ceremony very brief, for he was anxious to be off to the charmer of his heart; and came down stairs to mount his newly-gotten steed, which Gumbo, himself astride on the parson's black mare, held by the rein.

There was Gumbo on the black mare indeed, and holding another horse. But it was a bay horse—not a brown—a bay horse with broken knees—an aged, worn-out quadruped.

"What is this?" cries Harry.

"Your honour's new horse," says the groom, touching his cap.

"This brute?" exclaims the young gentleman, with one or more of those expressions then in use in England and Virginia. "Go and bring me round Prince William, Mr. William's horse, the brown horse."

"Mr. William have rode Prince William this morning away to Salisbury races. His last words was, 'Sam, saddle my bay horse, Cato, for Mr. Warrington this morning. He is Mr. Warrington's horse now. I sold him to him last night.' And I know your honour is bountiful: you will consider the groom."

My lord could not help breaking into a laugh at these words of Sam, the groom, whilst Harry, for his part, indulged in a number more of those remarks which politeness does not admit of our inserting here.

"Mr. William said he never could think of parting with the Prince under a hundred and twenty," said the groom, looking at the young man.

Lord Castlewood only laughed the more. "Will has been too much for thee, Harry Warrington."

"Too much for me, my lord! So may a fellow with loaded dice throw sixes, and be too much for me. I do not call this betting, I call it ch—"

"Mr. Warrington! Spare me bad words about my brother, if you please. Depend on it, I will take care that you are righted. Farewell. Ride quickly, or your coaches will be at Farnham before you;" and waving

him an adieu, my lord entered into the house, whilst Harry and his companion rode out of the courtyard. The young Virginian was much too eager to rejoin the carriages and his charmer, to remark the glances of unutterable love and affection which Gumbo shot from his fine eyes towards a young creature in the porter's lodge.

When the youth was gone, the chaplain and my lord sat down to finish their breakfast in peace and comfort. The two ladies did not return to this meal.

"That was one of Will's confounded rascally tricks," says my lord, "If our cousin breaks Will's head I should not wonder."

"He is used to the operation, my lord, and yet," adds the chaplain, with a grin, "when we were playing last night, the colour of the horse was not mentioned. I could not escape, having but one: and the black boy has ridden off on him. The young Virginian plays like a man, to do him justice."

"He wins because he does not care about losing. I think there can be little doubt but that he is very well to do. His mother's law-agents are my lawyers, and they write that the property is quite a principality, and grows richer every year."

"If it were a kingdom I know whom Mr. Warrington would make queen of it," said the obsequious chaplain.

"Who can account for taste, parson?" asks his lordship, with a sneer. "All men are so. The first woman I was in love with myself was forty; and as jealous as if she had been fifteen. It runs in the family. Colonel Esmond (he in scarlet and the breastplate yonder) married my grandmother, who was almost old enough

to be his. If this lad chooses to take out an elderly princess to Virginia, we must not baulk him."

"'Twere a consummation devoutly to be wished!" cries the chaplain. "Had I not best go to Tunbridge Wells myself, my lord, and be on the spot, and ready to exercise my sacred function in behalf of the young couple?"

"You shall have a pair of new nags, parson, if you do," said my lord. And with this we leave them peaceable over a pipe of tobacco after breakfast.

Harry was in such a haste to join the carriages that he almost forgot to take off his hat, and acknowledge the cheers of the Castlewood villagers: they all liked the lad, whose frank cordial ways and honest face got him a welcome in most places. Legends were still extant in Castlewood of his grandparents, and how his grandfather, Colonel Esmond, might have been Lord Castlewood, but would not. Old Lockwood at the gate often told of the Colonel's gallantry in Queen Anne's wars. His feats were exaggerated, the behaviour of the present family was contrasted with that of the old lord and lady: who might not have been very popular in their time, but were better folks than those now in possession. Lord Castlewood was a hard landlord: perhaps more disliked because he was known to be poor and embarrassed than because he was severe. As for Mr. Will, nobody was fond of him. The young gentleman had had many brawls and quarrels about the village, had received and given broken heads, had bills in the neighbouring towns which he could not or would not pay; had been arraigned before magistrates for tampering with village girls, and waylaid and cudgelled

by injured husbands, fathers, sweethearts. A hundred years ago his character and actions might have been described at length by the painter of manners; but the Comic Muse, now-a-days, does not lift up Molly Seagrim's curtain; she only indicates the presence of some one behind it, and passes on primly, with expressions of horror, and a fan before her eyes. The village had heard how the young Virginian squire had beaten Mr. Will at riding, at jumping, at shooting, and finally at card-playing, for everything is known; and they respected Harry all the more for this superiority. Above all, they admired him on account of the reputation of enormous wealth which Gumbo had made for his master. This fame had travelled over the whole county, and was preceding him at this moment on the boxes of Madame Bernstein's carriages, from which the valets, as they descended at the inns to bait, spread astounding reports of the young Virginian's rank and splendour. He was a prince in his own country. He had gold mines, diamond mines, furs, tobaccos, who knew what, or how much? No wonder the honest Britons cheered him and respected him for his prosperity, as the noble-hearted fellows always do. I am surprised city corporations did not address him, and offer gold boxes with the freedom of the city—he was so rich. Ah, a proud thing it is to be a Briton, and think that there is no country where prosperity is so much respected as in ours: and where success receives such constant affecting testimonials of loyalty.

So, leaving the villagers bawling, and their hats tossing in the air, Harry spurred his sorry beast, and galloped, with Gumbo behind him, until he came up with the cloud of dust in the midst of which his charmer's

chariot was enveloped. Penetrating into this cloud, he found himself at the window of the carriage. The Lady Maria had the back seat to herself; by keeping a little behind the wheels, he could have the delight of seeing her divine eyes and smiles. She held a finger to her lip. Madame Bernstein was already dozing on her cushions. Harry did not care to disturb the old lady. To look at his cousin was bliss enough for him. The landscape around him might be beautiful, but what did he heed it? All the skies and trees of summer were as nothing compared to yonder face; the hedgerow birds sang no such sweet music as her sweet monosyllables.

The Baroness's fat horses were accustomed to short journeys, easy paces, and plenty of feeding; so that, ill as Harry Warrington was mounted, he could, without much difficulty, keep pace with his elderly kinswoman. At two o'clock they baited for a couple of hours for dinner. Mr. Warrington paid the landlord generously. What price could be too great for the pleasure which he enjoyed in being near his adored Maria, and having the blissful chance of a conversation with her, scarce interrupted by the soft breathing of Madame de Bernstein, who, after a comfortable meal, indulged in an agreeable half-hour's slumber? In voices soft and low, Maria and her young gentleman talked over and over again those delicious nonsenses which people in Harry's condition never tire of hearing and uttering.

They were going to a crowded watering-place, where all sorts of beauty and fashion would be assembled; timid Maria was certain that amongst the young beauties, Harry would discover some whose charms were far more worthy to occupy his attention than any her

homely face and figure could boast of. By all the gods Harry vowed that Venus herself could not tempt him from her side. It was he who for his part had occasion to fear. When the young men of fashion beheld his peerless Maria they would crowd round her car; they would cause her to forget the rough and humble American lad who knew nothing of fashion or wit, who had only a faithful heart at her service.

Maria smiles, she casts her eyes to heaven, she vows that Harry knows nothing of the truth and fidelity of woman; it is his sex, on the contrary, which proverbially is faithless, and which delights to play with poor female hearts. A scuffle ensues; a clatter is heard among the knives and forks of the dessert; a glass tumbles over and breaks. An "Oh!" escapes from the innocent lips of Maria. The disturbance has been caused by the broad cuff of Mr. Warrington's coat, which has been stretched across the table to seize Lady Maria's hand, and has upset the wine-glass in so doing. Surely nothing could be more natural, or indeed necessary, than that Harry, upon hearing his sex's honour impeached, should seize upon his fair accuser's hand, and vow eternal fidelity upon those charming fingers?

What a part they play, or used to play, in love-making, those hands! How quaintly they are squeezed at that period of life! How they are pushed into conversation! what absurd vows and protests are palmed off by their aid! What good can there be in pulling and pressing a thumb and four fingers? I fancy I see Alexis laugh, who is haply reading this page by the side of Araminta. To talk about thumbs indeed! . . . . Maria looks round, for her part, to see if Madame Bernstein has been awakened by the crash of the glass; but

the old lady slumbers quite calmly in her arm-chair, so her niece thinks there can be no harm in yielding to Harry's gentle pressure.

The horses are put to: Paradise is over—at least until the next occasion. When my landlord enters with the bill, Harry is standing quite at a distance from his cousin, looking from the window at the cavalcade gathering below. Madame Bernstein wakes up from her slumber, smiling and quite unconscious. With what profound care and reverential politeness Mr. Warrington hands his aunt to her carriage! how demure and simple looks Lady Maria as she follows! Away go the carriages, in the midst of a profoundly bowing landlord and waiters; of country folks gathered round the blazing inn-sign; of shopmen gazing from their homely little doors; of boys and market-folks under the colonnade of the old town-hall; of loungers along the gabled street. "It is the famous Baroness Bernstein. That is she, the old lady in the capuchin. It is the rich young American who is just come from Virginia, and is worth millions and millions. Well, sure, he might have a better horse." The cavalcade disappears, and the little town lapses into its usual quiet. The landlord goes back to his friends at the club, to tell how the great folks are going to sleep at "The Bush," at Farnham, to-night.

The inn-dinner had been plentiful, and all the three guests of the inn had done justice to the good cheer. Harry had the appetite natural to his period of life. Maria and her aunt were also not indifferent to a good dinner: Madame Bernstein had had a comfortable nap after hers, which had no doubt helped her to bear all the good things of the meal—the meat pies, and the fruit

pies, and the strong ale, and the heady port wine. She reclined at ease on her seat of the landau, and looked back affably, and smiled at Harry and exchanged a little talk with him as he rode by the carriage side. But what ailed the beloved being who sat with her back to the horses? Her complexion, which was exceedingly fair, was farther ornamented with a pair of red cheeks, which Harry took to be natural roses. (You see, madam, that your surmises regarding the Lady Maria's conduct with her cousin are quite wrong and uncharitable, and that the timid lad had made no such experiments as you suppose, in order to ascertain whether the roses were real or artificial. A kiss, indeed! I blush to think you should imagine that the present writer could indicate anything so shocking!) Maria's bright red cheeks, I say still, continued to blush as it seemed with a strange metallic bloom: but the rest of her face, which had used to rival the lily in whiteness, became of a jonquil colour. Her eyes stared round with a ghastly expression. Harry was alarmed at the agony depicted in the charmer's countenance; which not only exhibited pain, but was exceedingly unbecoming. Madame Bernstein also at length remarked her niece's indisposition, and asked her if sitting backwards in the carriage made her ill, which poor Maria confessed to be the fact. On this, the elder lady was forced to make room for her niece on her own side, and in the course of the drive to Farnham uttered many gruff, disagreeable, sarcastic remarks to her fellow-traveller, indicating her great displeasure that Maria should be so impertinent as to be ill on the first day of a journey.

When they reached the "Bush Inn" at Farnham, under which name a famous inn has stood in Farnham

town for these three hundred years—the dear invalid retired with her maid to her bedroom: scarcely glancing a piteous look at Harry as she retreated, and leaving the lad's mind in a strange confusion of dismay and sympathy. Those yellow, yellow cheeks, those livid wrinkled eyelids, that ghastly red—how ill his blessed Maria looked! And not cnly how ill, but how—away, horrible thought, unmanly suspicion! He tried to shut the idea out from his mind. He had little appetite for supper, though the jolly Baroness partook of that repast as if she had had no dinner; and certainly as if she had no sympathy with her invalid niece.

She sent her major-domo to see if Lady Maria would have anything from the table. The servant brought back word that her ladyship was still very unwell, and declined any refreshment.

"I hope she intends to be well to-morrow morning," cried Madame Bernstein, rapping her little hand on the table. "I hate people to be ill in an inn, or on a journey. Will you play picquet with me, Harry?"

Harry was happy to be able to play picquet with his aunt. "That absurd Maria!" says Madame Bernstein, drinking from a great glass of negus, "she takes liberties with herself. She never had a good constitution. She is forty-one years old. All her upper teeth are false, and she can't eat with them. Thank heaven, I have still got every tooth in my head. How clumsily you deal, child!"

Deal clumsily, indeed! Had a dentist been extracting Harry's own grinders at that moment, would he have been expected to mind his cards, and deal them neatly? When a man is laid on the rack at the Inquisition, is it natural that he should smile and speak politely

and coherently to the grave, quiet Inquisitor? Beyond that little question regarding the cards, Harry's Inquisitor did not show the smallest disturbance. Her face indicated neither surprise, nor triumph, nor cruelty. Madame Bernstein did not give one more stab to her niece that night: but she played at cards, and prattled with Harry, indulging in her favourite talk about old times, and parting from him with great cordiality and good humour. Very likely he did not heed her stories. Very likely other thoughts occupied his mind. Maria is forty-one years old, Maria has false—Oh, horrible, horrible! Has she a false eye? Has she false hair? Has she a wooden leg? I envy not that boy's dreams that night.

Madame Bernstein, in the morning, said she had slept as sound as a top. *She* had no remorse, that was clear. (Some folks are happy and easy in mind when their victim is stabbed and done for.) Lady Maria made her appearance at the breakfast-table, too. Her ladyship's indisposition was fortunately over: her aunt congratulated her affectionately on her good looks. She sat down to her breakfast. She looked appealingly in Harry's face. He remarked, with his usual brilliancy and originality, that he was very glad her ladyship was better. Why, at the tone of his voice, did she start, and again gaze at him with frightened eyes? There sat the Chief Inquisitor, smiling, perfectly calm, eating ham and muffins. Oh, poor writhing, rack-rent victim! Oh, stony Inquisitor! Oh, Baroness Bernstein! It was cruel! cruel!

Round about Farnham the hops were gloriously green in the sunshine, and the carriages drove through the richest, most beautiful country. Maria insisted upon

taking her old seat. She thanked her dear aunt. It would not in the least incommode her now. She gazed, as she had done yesterday, in the face of the young knight riding by the carriage side. She looked for those answering signals which used to be lighted up in yonder two windows, and told that love was burning within. She smiled gently at him, to which token of regard he tried to answer with a sickly grin of recognition. Miserable youth! *Those* were not false teeth he saw when she smiled. He thought they were, and they tore and lacerated him.

And so the day sped on—sunshiny and brilliant overhead, but all over clouds for Harry and Maria. He saw nothing: he thought of Virginia: he remembered how he had been in love with Parson Broadbent's daughter at Jamestown, and how quickly that business had ended. He longed vaguely to be at home again. A plague on all these cold-hearted English relations! Did they not all mean to trick him? Were they not all scheming against him? Had not that confounded Will cheated him about the horse?

At this very juncture Maria gave a scream so loud and shrill that Madame Bernstein woke, the coachman pulled his horses up, and the footman beside him sprang down from his box in a panic.

"Let me out! let me out!" screamed Maria. "Let me go to him! let me go to him!"

"What is it?" asked the Baroness.

It was that Will's horse had come down on his knees and nose, had sent his rider over his head; and Mr. Harry, who ought to have known better, was lying on his own face quite motionless.

Gumbo, who had been dallying with the maids of the

second carriage, clattered up, and mingled his howls with Lady Maria's lamentations. Madame Bernstein descended from her landau, and came slowly up, trembling a good deal.

"He is dead—he is dead!" sobbed Maria.

"Don't be a goose, Maria!" her aunt said. "Ring at that gate, some one!"

Will's horse had gathered himself up and stood perfectly quiet after his feat: but his late rider gave not the slightest sign of life.

CHAPTER XXI

SAMARITANS

LEST any tender-hearted reader should be in alarm for Mr. Harry Warrington's safety, and fancy that his broken-kneed horse had carried him altogether out of this life and history, let us set her mind easy at the beginning of this chapter, by assuring her that nothing very serious has happened. How can we afford to kill off our heroes, when they are scarcely out of their teens, and we have not reached the age of manhood of the story? We are in mourning already for one of our Virginians, who has come to grief in America; surely we cannot kill off the other in England? No, no. Heroes are not despatched with such hurry and violence unless there is a cogent reason for making away with them. Were a

gentleman to perish every time a horse came down with him, not only the hero, but the author of this chronicle would have gone under ground, whereas the former is but sprawling outside it, and will be brought to life again as soon as he has been carried into the house where Madame de Bernstein's servants have rung the bell.

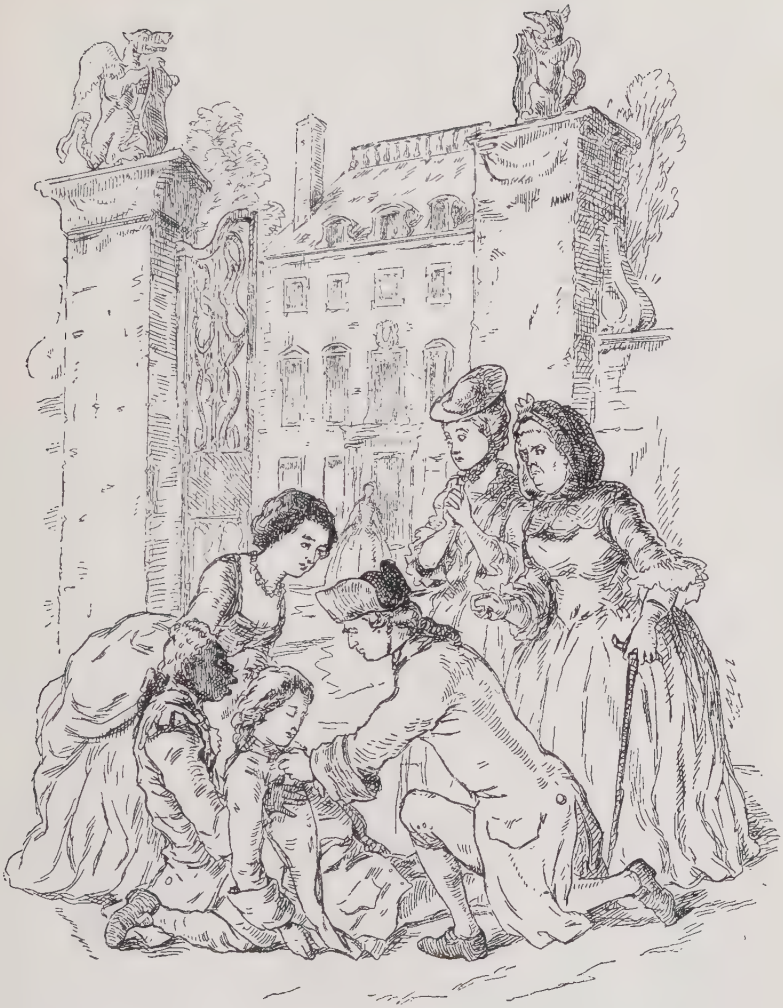
And to convince you that at least this youngest of the Virginians is still alive, here is an authentic copy of a letter from the lady into whose house he was taken after his fall from Mr. Will's brute of a broken-kneed horse, and in whom he appears to have found a kind friend.

"TO MRS. ESMOND WARRINGTON, OF CASTLEWOOD,

"AT HER HOUSE AT RICHMOND, IN VIRGINIA.

"IF Mrs. Esmond Warrington of Virginia can call to mind twenty-three years ago, when Miss Rachel Esmond was at Kensington Boarding School, she may perhaps remember Miss Molly Benson, her class mate, who has forgotten all the little quarrels which they used to have together (in which Miss Molly was very often in the wrong), and only remembers the *generous, high-spirited, sprightly Miss Esmond*, the Princess Pocahontas, to whom so many of our school-fellows paid court.

"Dear Madam! I can never forget that you were *dear Rachel* once upon a time, as I was your dearest Molly. Though we parted not very good friends when you went home to Virginia, yet you know how fond we once were. I still, Rachel, have the gold *étui* your papa gave me when he came to *our speech-day* at Kensington, and we two performed the quarrel of Brutus and Cassius out of Shakspeare; and 'twas only yesterday morning I was dreaming that we were both called up to say our lesson before *the awful Miss Hardwood*, and that



Welcome

I did not know it, and that as usual Miss Rachel Esmond went above me. How well remembered those old days are! How young we grow as we think of them! I remember our walks and our exercises, our good King and Queen as they walked in Kensington Gardens, and their court following them, whilst we of Miss Hardwood's school curtseyed in a row. I can tell still what we had for dinner on each day of the week, and point to the place where your garden was, which was always so much better kept than mine. So was Miss Esmond's chest of drawers a model of neatness, whilst mine were in a sad condition. Do you remember how we used to tell stories in the dormitory, and Madame Hibou, the French governess, would come out of bed and interrupt us with her *hooting?* Have you forgot the poor dancing-master, who told us he had been waylaid by assassins, but who was beaten, it appears, by my lord your brother's footmen? My dear, your cousin, the Lady Maria Esmond (her papa was, I think, but Viscount Castlewood in those times), has just been on a visit to this house, where you may be sure I did not recall those sad times to her remembrance, about which I am now chattering to Mrs. Esmond.

"Her ladyship has been staying here, and another relative of yours, the Baroness of Bernstein, and the two ladies are both gone on to Tunbridge Wells; but another and dearer relative still remains in my house, and is sound asleep, I trust, in the very next room, and the name of this gentleman is Mr. Henry Esmond Warrington. Now, do you understand how you come to hear from an old friend? Do not be alarmed, dear Madam! I know you are thinking at this moment, 'My boy is ill. That is why Miss Molly Benson writes to me.' No, my dear; Mr. Warrington *was* ill yesterday, but to-day he is very comfortable; and our Doctor, who is no less a person than my dear husband, Colonel Lambert, has blooded him, has set his shoulder, which was dislocated, and pronounces that in two days more Mr. Warrington will be quite ready to take the road.

"I fear I and my girls are sorry that he is so soon to be well.

Yesterday evening, as we were at tea, there came a great ringing at our gate, which disturbed us all, as the bell very seldom sounds in this quiet place, unless a passing beggar pulls it for charity; and the servants running out, returned with the news, that a young gentleman, who had a fall from his horse, was lying lifeless on the road, surrounded by the friends in whose company he was travelling. At this, my Colonel (who is sure the most Samaritan of men!) hastens away, to see how he can serve the fallen traveller, and presently, with the aid of the servants, and followed by two ladies, brings into the house such a pale, lifeless, beautiful young man! Ah, my dear, how I rejoice to think that your child has found shelter and succour under my roof! that my husband has saved him from pain and fever, and has been the means of restoring him to you and health! We shall be friends again now, shall we not? I was very ill last year, and 'twas even thought I should die. Do you know, that I often thought of you then, and how you had parted from me in anger so many years ago? I began then a foolish note to you, which I was too sick to finish, to tell you that if I went the way appointed for us all, I should wish to leave the world in charity with every single being I had known in it.

"Your cousin, the Right Honourable Lady Maria Esmond, showed a great deal of maternal tenderness and concern for her young kinsman after his accident. I am sure she hath a kind heart. The Baroness de Bernstein, who is of an advanced age, could not be expected to feel so keenly as *we young people;* but was, nevertheless, very much moved and interested until Mr. Warrington was restored to consciousness, when she said she was anxious to get on towards Tunbridge, whither she was bound, and was afraid of all things to lie in a place where there was no doctor at hand. *My* Æsculapius laughingly said, he would not offer to attend upon a lady of quality, though he would answer for his young patient. Indeed, the Colonel, during his campaigns, has had plenty of practice in accidents of this nature, and I am certain, were we to call in all the faculty for twenty miles round, Mr. Warrington could get no better treatment. So,

leaving the young gentleman to the care of me and my daughters, the Baroness and her ladyship took their leave of us, the latter very loth to go. When he is well enough, my Colonel will ride with him as far as Westerham, but *on his own horses*, where an old army-comrade of Mr. Lambert's resides. And as this letter will not take the post for Falmouth until, by God's blessing, your son is well and perfectly restored, you need be under no sort of alarm for him whilst under the roof of,

"Madam,

"Your affectionate humble servant,

"MARY LAMBERT.

"P. S. Thursday. " " ?

"I am glad to hear (Mr. Warrington's coloured gentleman hath informed our people of the *gratifying circumstance*) that Providence hath blessed Mrs. Esmond with *such vast wealth*, and with an heir so likely to do credit to it. Our present means are amply sufficient, but will be small when divided amongst our survivors. Ah, dear Madam! I have heard of your calamity of last year. Though the Colonel and I have reared many children (five), we have lost two, and *a mother's heart* can feel for yours! I own to you, mine yearned to your boy to-day, when (in a manner *inexpressibly affecting* to me and Mr. Lambert) he mentioned his dear brother. 'Tis impossible to see your son, and not to love and regard him. I am thankful that it has been our lot to succour him in his trouble, and that in receiving the stranger within our gates, we should be giving hospitality to the son of an old friend."

Nature has written a letter of credit upon some men's faces, which is honoured almost wherever presented. Harry Warrington's countenance was so stamped in his youth. His eyes were so bright, his cheek so red and healthy, his look so frank and open, that almost all who beheld him, nay, even those who cheated him, trusted

him. Nevertheless, as we have hinted, the lad was by no means the artless stripling he seemed to be. He was knowing enough with all his blushing cheeks; perhaps more wily and wary than he grew to be in after-age. Sure, a shrewd and generous man (who has led an honest life and has no secret blushes for his conscience) grows simpler as he grows older; arrives at his sum of right by more rapid processes of calculation; learns to eliminate false arguments more readily, and hits the mark of truth with less previous trouble of aiming, and disturbance of mind. Or is it only a senile delusion, that some of our vanities are cured with our growing years, and that we become more just in our perceptions of our own and our neighbours' shortcomings? . . . I would humbly suggest that young people, though they look prettier, have larger eyes, and not near so many wrinkles about their eyelids, are often as artful as some of their elders. What little monsters of cunning your frank schoolboys are! How they cheat mamma! how they hoodwink papa! how they humbug the housekeeper! how they cringe to the big boy for whom they fag at school! what a long lie and five years' hypocrisy and flattery is their conduct towards Dr. Birch! And the little boys' sisters? Are they any better, and is it only after they come out in the world that the little darlings learn a trick or two?

You may see, by the above letter of Mrs. Lambert, that she, like all good women, (and, indeed, almost all bad women,) was a sentimental person; and as she looked at Harry Warrington laid in her best bed, after the Colonel had bled him and clapped in his shoulder, as holding by her husband's hand she beheld the lad in a sweet slumber, murmuring a faint inarticulate word

or two in his sleep, a faint blush quivering on his cheek, she owned he was a pretty lad indeed, and confessed with a sort of compunction that neither of her two boys —Jack who was at Oxford, and Charles who was just gone back to school after the Bartlemytide holidays— was half so handsome as the Virginian. What a good figure the boy had, and when papa bled him, his arm was as white as any lady's!

"Yes, as you say, Jack might have been as handsome but for the small-pox: and as for Charley—" "Always took after his papa, my dear Molly," said the Colonel, looking at his own honest face in a little looking-glass with a cut border and a japanned frame, by which the chief guests of the worthy gentleman and lady had surveyed their patches and powder, or shaved their hospitable beards.

"*Did* I say so, my love?" whispered Mrs. Lambert, looking rather scared.

"No; but you thought so, Mrs. Lambert."

"How can you tell one's thoughts so, Martin?" asks the lady.

"Because I am a conjuror, and because you tell them yourself, my dear," answered her husband. "Don't be frightened: he won't wake after that draught I gave him. Because you never see a young fellow but you are comparing him with your own. Because you never hear of one but you are thinking which of our girls he shall fall in love with and marry."

"Don't be foolish, sir," says the lady, putting a hand up to the Colonel's lips. They have softly trodden out of their guest's bedchamber by this time, and are in the adjoining dressing-closet, a snug little wainscoted room looking over gardens, with India curtains, more

Japan chests and cabinets, a treasure of china, and a most refreshing odour of fresh lavender.

"You can't deny it, Mrs. Lambert," the Colonel resumes; "as you were looking at the young gentleman just now, you were thinking to yourself which of my girls will he marry? Shall it be Theo, or shall it be Hester? And then you thought of Lucy who was at boarding-school."

"There is no keeping anything from you, Martin Lambert," sighs the wife.

"There is no keeping it out of your eyes, my dear. What is this burning desire all you women have for selling and marrying your daughters? We men don't wish to part with 'em. I am sure, for my part, I should not like yonder young fellow half as well if I thought he intended to carry one of my darlings away with him."

"Sure, Martin, I have been so happy myself," says the fond wife and mother, looking at her husband with her very best eyes, "that I must wish my girls to do as I have done, and be happy, too!"

"Then you think good husbands are common, Mrs. Lambert, and that you may walk any day into the road before the house and find one shot out at the gate like a sack of coals?"

"Was n't it providential, sir, that this young gentleman should be thrown over his horse's head at our very gate, and that he should turn out to be the son of my old schoolfellow and friend?" asked the wife. "There is something more than accident in such cases, depend upon that, Mr. Lambert!"

"And this was the stranger you saw in the candle three nights running, I suppose?"

"And in the fire, too, sir; twice a coal jumped out

close by Theo. You may sneer, sir, but these things are *not* to be despised. Did I not see you distinctly coming back from Minorca, and dream of you at the very day and hour when you were wounded in Scotland?"

"How many times have you seen me wounded, when I had not a scratch, my dear? How many times have you seen me ill when I had no sort of hurt? You are always prophesying, and 'twere very hard on you if you were not sometimes right. Come! Let us leave our guest asleep comfortably, and go down and give the girls their French lesson."

So saying, the honest gentleman put his wife's arm under his, and they descended together the broad oak staircase of the comfortable old hall, round which hung the effigies of many foregone Lamberts, worthy magistrates, soldiers, country gentlemen, as was the Colonel whose acquaintance we have just made. The Colonel was a gentleman of pleasant, waggish humour. The French lesson which he and his daughters conned together was a scene out of Monsieur Molière's comedy of "Tartuffe," and papa was pleased to be very facetious with Miss Theo, by calling her Madam, and by treating her with a great deal of mock respect and ceremony. The girls read together with their father a scene or two of his favourite author (nor were they less modest in those days, though their tongues were a little more free), and papa was particularly arch and funny as he read from Orgon's part in that celebrated play:

ORGON. Or sus, nous voilà bien. J'ai, Mariane, en vous
Reconnu de tout temps un esprit assez doux,
Et de tout temps aussi vous m'avez été chère.

MARIANE. Je suis fort redevable à cet amour de père.

ORGON. Fort bien. Que dites-vous de Tartuffe notre hôte?
MARIANE. Qui? Moi?
ORGON. Vous. Voyez bien comme vous répondrez.
MARIANE. Hélas! J'en dirai, moi, tout ce que vous voudrez!
(*Mademoiselle Mariane laughs and blushes in spite of herself, whilst reading this line.*)
ORGON. C'est parler sagement. Dites moi donc, ma fille,
Qu'en toute sa personne un haut mérite brille,
Qu'il touche votre cœur, et qu'il vous seroit doux
De le voir par mon choix devenir votre époux!

"Have we not read the scene prettily, Elmire?" says the Colonel, laughing, and turning round to his wife.

Elmira prodigiously admired Orgon's reading, and so did his daughters, and almost everything besides which Mr. Lambert said or did. Canst thou, O friendly reader, count upon the fidelity of an artless and tender heart or two, and reckon among the blessings which heaven hath bestowed on thee the love of faithful women? Purify thine own heart, and try to make it worthy theirs. On thy knees, on thy knees, give thanks for the blessing awarded thee! All the prizes of life are nothing compared to that one. All the rewards of ambition, wealth, pleasure, only vanity and disappointment—grasped at greedily and fought for fiercely, and, over and over again, found worthless by the weary winners. But love seems to survive life, and to reach beyond it. I think we take it with us past the grave. Do we not still give it to those who have left us? May we not hope that they feel it for us, and that we shall leave it here in one or two fond bosoms, when we also are gone?

And whence, or how, or why, pray, this sermon? You see I know more about this Lambert family than you

do to whom I am just presenting them: as how should you who never heard of them before? You may not like my friends; very few people do like strangers to whom they are presented with an outrageous flourish of praises on the part of the introducer. You say (quite naturally) what? Is this all? Are these the people he is so fond of? Why, the girl's not a beauty—the mother is good-natured, and may have been good-looking once, but she has no trace of it now—and, as for the father, he is quite an ordinary man. Granted: but don't you acknowledge that the sight of an honest man, with an honest, loving wife by his side, and surrounded by loving and obedient children, presents something very sweet and affecting to you? If you are made acquainted with such a person, and see the eager kindness of the fond faces round about him, and that pleasant confidence and affection which beams from his own, do you mean to say you are not touched and gratified? If you happen to stay in such a man's house, and at morning or evening see him and his children and domestics gathered together in a certain name, do you not join humbly in the petitions of those servants, and close them with a reverent Amen? That first night of his stay at Oakhurst, Harry Warrington, who had had a sleeping potion, and was awake sometimes rather feverish, thought he heard the Evening Hymn, and that his dearest brother George was singing it at home, in which delusion the patient went off again to sleep.

CHAPTER XXII

IN HOSPITAL

SINKING into a sweet slumber, and lulled by those harmonious sounds, our young patient passed a night of pleasant unconciousness, and awoke in the morning to find a summer sun streaming in at the window, and his kind host and hostess smiling at his bed-curtains. He was ravenously hungry, and his doctor permitted him straightway to partake of a mess of chicken, which the doctor's wife told him had been prepared by the hands of one of her daughters.

One of her daughters? A faint image of a young person—of two young persons—with red cheeks and black waving locks, smiling round his couch, and suddenly departing thence, soon after he had come to himself, arose in the young man's mind. Then, then, there

returned the remembrance of a female—lovely, it is true, but more elderly—certainly considerably older—and with f— O horror and remorse! He writhed with anguish, as a certain recollection crossed him. An immense gulf of time gaped between him and the past. How long was it since he had heard that those pearls were artificial,—that those golden locks were only pinchbeck? A long, long time ago, when he was a boy, an innocent boy. Now he was a man—quite an old man. He had been bled copiously; he had a little fever; he had had nothing to eat for very many hours; he had had a sleeping-draught, and a long, deep slumber after.

"What is it, my dear child?" cries kind Mrs. Lambert, as he started.

"Nothing, Madam; a twinge in my shoulder," said the lad. "I speak to my host and hostess? Sure you have been very kind to me."

"We are old friends, Mr. Warrington. My husband, Colonel Lambert, knew your father, and I and your mamma were school-girls together at Kensington. You were no stranger to us when your aunt and cousin told us who you were."

"Are they here?" asked Harry, looking a little blank.

"They must have lain at Tunbridge Wells last night. They sent a horseman from Reigate yesterday for news of you."

"Ah! I remember," says Harry, looking at his bandaged arm.

"I have made a good cure of you, Mr. Warrington. And now Mrs. Lambert and the cook must take charge of you."

"Nay. Theo prepared the chicken and rice, Mr. Lambert," said the lady. "Will Mr. Warrington get

up after he has had his breakfast? We will send your valet to you."

"If howling proves fidelity, your man must be a most fond, attached creature," says Mr. Lambert.

"He let your baggage travel off after all in your aunt's carriage," said Mrs. Lambert. "You must wear my husband's linen, which, I dare say, is not so fine as yours."

"Pish, my dear! my shirts are good shirts enough for any Christian," cries the Colonel.

"They are Theo's and Hester's work," says mamma. At which her husband arches his eyebrows and looks at her. "And Theo hath ripped and sewed your sleeve to make it quite comfortable for your shoulder," the lady added.

"What beautiful roses!" cries Harry, looking at a fine china vase full of them that stood on the toilet-table, under the japan-framed glass.

"My daughter, Theo, cut them this morning. Well, Mr. Lambert? She *did* cut them!"

I suppose the Colonel was thinking that his wife introduced Theo too much into the conversation, and trod on Mrs. Lambert's slipper, or pulled her robe, or otherwise nudged her into a sense of propriety.

"And I fancied I heard some one singing the Evening Hymn very sweetly last night—or was it only a dream?" asked the young patient.

"Theo again, Mr. Warrington!" said the Colonel, laughing. "My servants said your negro man began to sing it in the kitchen as if he was a church organ."

"Our people sing it at home, sir. My grandpapa used to love it very much. His wife's father was a great friend of good Bishop Ken who wrote it; and—and my

dear brother used to love it too," said the boy, his voice dropping.

It was then, I suppose, that Mrs. Lambert felt inclined to give the boy a kiss. His little accident, illness and recovery, the kindness of the people round about him, had softened Harry Warrington's heart, and opened it to better influences than those which had been brought to bear on it for some six weeks past. He was breathing a purer air than that tainted atmosphere of selfishness, and worldliness, and corruption, into which he had been plunged since his arrival in England. Sometimes the young man's fate, or choice, or weakness, leads him into the fellowship of the giddy and vain; happy he, whose lot makes him acquainted with the wiser company, whose lamps are trimmed, and whose pure hearts keep modest watch.

The pleased matron left her young patient devouring Miss Theo's mess of rice and chicken, and the Colonel seated by the lad's bedside. Gratitude to his hospitable entertainers, and contentment after a comfortable meal, caused in Mr. Warrington a very pleasant condition of mind and body. He was ready to talk now more freely than usually was his custom; for, unless excited by a strong interest or emotion, the young man was commonly taciturn and cautious in his converse with his fellows, and was by no means of an imaginative turn. Of books our youth had been but a very remiss student, nor were his remarks on such simple works as he had read very profound or valuable; but regarding dogs, horses, and the ordinary business of life, he was a far better critic; and, with any person interested in such subjects, conversed on them freely enough.

Harry's host, who had considerable shrewdness, and

experience of books, and cattle, and men, was pretty soon able to take the measure of his young guest in the talk which they now had together. It was now, for the first time, the Virginian learned that Mrs. Lambert had been an early friend of his mother's, and that the Colonel's own father had served with Harry's grandfather, Colonel Esmond, in the famous wars of Queen Anne. He found himself in a friend's country. He was soon at ease with his honest host, whose manners were quite simple and cordial, and who looked and seemed perfectly a gentleman, though he wore a plain fustian coat, and a waistcoat without a particle of lace.

"My boys are both away," said Harry's host, "or they would have shown you the country when you got up, Mr. Warrington. Now you can only have the company of my wife and her daughters. Mrs. Lambert hath told you already about one of them, Theo, our eldest, who made your broth, who cut your roses, and who mended your coat. She is not such a wonder as her mother imagines her to be; but little Theo is a smart little housekeeper, and a very good and cheerful lass, though her father says it."

"It is very kind of Miss Lambert to take so much care for me," says the young patient.

"She is no kinder to you than to any other mortal, and doth but her duty." Here the Colonel smiled. "I laugh at their mother for praising our children," he said, "and I think I am as foolish about them myself. The truth is, God hath given us very good and dutiful children, and I see no reason why I should disguise my thankfulness for such a blessing. You have never a sister, I think?"

"No, sir, I am alone now," Mr. Warrington said.

"Ay, truly, I ask your pardon for my thoughtlessness. Your man hath told our people what befell last year. I served with Braddock in Scotland; and hope he mended before he died. A wild fellow, sir, but there was a fund of truth about the man, and no little kindness under his rough swaggering manner. Your black fellow talks very freely about his master and his affairs. I suppose you permit him these freedoms as he rescued you—"

"Rescued *me?*" cries Mr. Warrington.

"From ever so many Indians on that very expedition. My Molly and I did not know we were going to entertain so prodigiously wealthy a gentleman. He saith that half Virginia belongs to you; but if the whole of North America were yours, we could but give you our best."

"Those negro boys, sir, lie like the father of all lies. They think it is for our honour to represent us as ten times as rich as we are. My mother has what would be a vast estate in England, and is a very good one at home. We are as well off as most of our neighbours, sir, but no better; and all our splendour is in Mr. Gumbo's foolish imagination. He never rescued me from an Indian in his life, and would run away at the sight of one, as my poor brother's boy did on that fatal day when he fell."

"The bravest man will do so at unlucky times," said the Colonel. "I myself saw the best troops in the world run at Preston, before a ragged mob of Highland savages."

"That was because the Highlanders fought for a good cause, sir."

"Do you think," asks Harry's host, "that the French

Indians had the good cause in the fight of last year?"

"The scoundrels! I would have the scalp of every murderous redskin among 'em!" cried Harry, clenching his fist. "They were robbing and invading the British territories, too. But the Highlanders were fighting for their king."

"We, on our side, were fighting for *our* king; and we ended by winning the battle," said the Colonel, laughing.

"Ah!" cried Harry, "if his Royal Highness the Prince had not turned back at Derby, your king and mine, now, would be his Majesty King James the Third!"

"Who made such a Tory of you, Mr. Warrington?" asked Lambert.

"Nay, sir, the Esmonds were always loyal!" answered the youth. "Had we lived at home, and twenty years sooner, brother and I often and often agreed that our heads would have been in danger. We certainly would have staked them for the king's cause."

"Yours is better on your shoulders than on a pole at Temple Bar. I have seen them there, and they don't look very pleasant, Mr. Warrington."

"I shall take off my hat, and salute them, whenever I pass the gate," cried the young man, "if the king and the whole court are standing by!"

"I doubt whether your relative, my Lord Castlewood, is as staunch a supporter of the king over the water," said Colonel Lambert, smiling: "or your aunt, the Baroness of Bernstein, who left you in our charge. Whatever her old partialities may have been, she has repented of them; she has rallied to our side, landed

her nephews in the Household, and looks to find a suitable match for her nieces. If you have Tory opinions, Mr. Warrington, take an old soldier's advice, and keep them to yourself."

"Why, sir, I do not think that you will betray me!" said the boy.

"Not I, but others might. You did not talk in this way at Castlewood? I mean the old Castlewood which you have just come from."

"I might be safe amongst my own kinsmen, surely, sir!" cried Harry.

"Doubtless. I would not say no. But a man's own kinsmen can play him slippery tricks at times, and he finds himself none the better for trusting them. I mean no offence to you or any of your family; but lacqueys have ears as well as their masters, and they carry about all sorts of stories. For instance, your black fellow is ready to tell all he knows about you, and a great deal more besides, as it would appear."

"Hath he told about the broken-kneed horse?" cried out Harry, turning very red.

"To say truth, my groom seemed to know something of the story, and said it was a shame a gentleman should sell another such a brute; let alone a cousin. I am not here to play the Mentor to you, or to carry about servants' tittle-tattle. When you have seen more of your cousins, you will form your own opinion of them; meanwhile, take an old soldier's advice, I say again, and be cautious with whom you deal, and what you say."

Very soon after this little colloquy, Mr. Lambert's guest rose, with the assistance of Gumbo, his valet, to whom he, for a hundredth time at least, promised a sound caning if ever he should hear that Gumbo had

ventured to talk about his affairs again in the servants'-hall,—which prohibition Gumbo solemnly vowed and declared he would for ever obey; but I dare say he was chattering the whole of the Castlewood secrets to his new friends of Colonel Lambert's kitchen; for Harry's hostess certainly heard a number of stories concerning him which she could not prevent her housekeeper from telling; though of course I would not accuse that worthy lady, or any of her sex or ours, of undue curiosity regarding their neighbours' affairs. But how can you prevent servants talking, or listening when the faithful attached creatures talk to you?

Mr. Lambert's house stood on the outskirts of the little town of Oakhurst, which, if he but travels in the right direction, the patient reader will find on the road between Farnham and Reigate,—and Madame Bernstein's servants naturally pulled at the first bell at hand, when the young Virginian met with his mishap. A few hundred yards further, was the long street of the little old town, where hospitality might have been found under the great swinging ensigns of a couple of inns, and medical relief was to be had, as a blazing gilt pestle and mortar indicated. But what surgeon could have ministered more cleverly to a patient than Harry's host, who tended him without a fee, or what Boniface could make him more comfortably welcome?

Two tall gates, each surmounted by a couple of heraldic monsters, led from the high-road up to a neat, broad stone terrace, whereon stood Oakhurst House: a square brick building, with windows faced with stone, and many high chimneys, and a tall roof surmounted by a fair balustrade. Behind the house stretched a large garden, where there was plenty of room for cabbages as well as

roses to grow; and before the mansion, separated from it by the high-road, was a field of many acres, where the Colonel's cows and horses were at grass. Over the centre window was a carved shield supported by the same monsters who pranced or ramped upon the entrance-gates; and a coronet over the shield. The fact is, that the house had been originally the jointure-house of Oakhurst Castle, which stood hard by,—its chimneys and turrets appearing over the surrounding woods, now bronzed with the darkest foliage of summer. Mr. Lambert's was the greatest house in Oakhurst town; but the Castle was of more importance than all the town put together. The Castle and the jointure-house had been friends of many years' date. Their fathers had fought side by side in Queen Anne's wars. There were two small pieces of ordnance on the terrace of the jointure-house, and six before the Castle, which had been taken out of the same privateer, which Mr. Lambert and his kinsman and commander, Lord Wrotham, had brought into Harwich in one of their voyages home from Flanders with despatches from the Great Duke.

His toilet completed with Mr. Gumbo's aid, his fair hair neatly dressed by that artist, and his open ribboned sleeve and wounded shoulder supported by a handkerchief which hung from his neck, Harry Warrington made his way out of his sick-chamber, preceded by his kind host, who led him first down a broad oak stair, round which hung many pikes and muskets of ancient shape, and so into a square marble paved room, from which the living-rooms of the house branched off. There were more arms in this hall—pikes and halberts of ancient date, pistols and jack-boots of more than a century old, that had done service in Cromwell's wars, a tattered

French guidon which had been borne by a French gendarme at Malplaquet, and a pair of cumbrous Highland broadswords, which, having been carried as far as Derby, had been flung away on the fatal field of Culloden. Here were breastplates and black morions of Oliver's troopers, and portraits of stern warriors in buff jerkins and plain bands and short hair. "They fought against your grandfathers and King Charles, Mr. Warrington," said Harry's host. "I don't hide that. They rode to join the Prince of Orange at Exeter. We were Whigs, young gentleman, and something more. John Lambert, the Major-General, was a kinsman of our house, and we were all more or less partial to short hair and long sermons. You do not seem to like either?" Indeed, Harry's face manifested signs of anything but pleasure whilst he examined the portraits of the Parliamentary heroes. "Be not alarmed, we are very good churchmen now. My eldest son will be in orders ere long. He is now travelling as governor to my Lord Wrotham's son in Italy, and as for our women, they are all for the Church, and carry me with 'em. Every woman is a Tory at heart. Mr. Pope says a rake, but I think t'other is the more charitable word. Come, let us go see them." And flinging open the dark oak door, Colonel Lambert led his young guest into the parlour where the ladies were assembled.

"Here is Miss Hester," said the Colonel, "and this is Miss Theo, the soup-maker, the tailoress, the harpsichord player, and the songstress, who set you to sleep last night. Make a curtsey to the gentleman, young ladies! Oh, I forgot, and Theo is the mistress of the roses which you admired a short while since in your bedroom. I think she has kept some of them in her cheeks."

In fact, Miss Theo was making a profound curtsey and blushing most modestly as her papa spoke. I am not going to describe her person,—though we shall see a great deal of her in the course of this history. She was not a particular beauty. Harry Warrington was not over head and ears in love with her at an instant's warning, and faithless to—to that other individual with whom, as we have seen, the youth had lately been smitten. Miss Theo had kind eyes and a sweet voice; a ruddy freckled cheek and a round white neck, on which, out of a little cap such as misses wore in those times, fell rich curling clusters of dark brown hair. She was not a delicate or sentimental-looking person. Her arms, which were worn bare from the elbow like other ladies' arms in those days, were very jolly and red. Her feet were not so miraculously small but that you could see them without a telescope. There was nothing waspish about her waist. This young person was sixteen years of age, and looked older. I don't know what call she had to blush so when she made her curtsey to the stranger. It was such a deep ceremonial curtsey as you never see at present. She and her sister both made these "cheeses" in compliment to the new comer, and with much stately agility.

As Miss Theo rose up out of this salute, her papa tapped her under the chin (which was of the double sort of chins), and laughingly hummed out the line which he had read the day before. *"Eh bien! que dites-vous, ma fille, de notre hôte?"*

"Nonsense, Mr. Lambert!" cries mamma.

"Nonsense is sometimes the best kind of sense in the world," said Colonel Lambert. His guest looked puzzled.

"Are you fond of nonsense?" the Colonel continued to Harry, seeing by the boy's face that the latter had no great love or comprehension of his favourite humour. "We consume a vast deal of it in this house. Rabelais is my favourite reading. My wife is all for Mr. Fielding and Theophrastus. I think Theo prefers Tom Brown, and Mrs. Hetty here loves Dean Swift."

"Our papa is talking what *he* loves," says Miss Hetty.

"And what is that, Miss?" asks the father of his second daughter.

"Sure, sir, you said yourself it was nonsense," answers the young lady, with a saucy toss of her head.

"Which of them do you like best, Mr. Warrington?" asked the honest Colonel.

"Which of whom, sir?"

"The Curate of Meudon, or the Dean of St. Patrick's, or honest Tom, or Mr. Fielding?"

"And what were they, sir?"

"They! Why, they wrote books."

"Indeed, sir? I never heard of either one of 'em," said Harry, hanging down his head. "I fear my book learning was neglected at home, sir. My brother had read every book that ever was wrote, I think. He could have talked to you about 'em for hours together."

With this little speech Mrs. Lambert's eyes turned to her daughter, and Miss Theo cast hers down and blushed.

"Never mind, honesty is better than books any day, Mr. Warrington!" cried the jolly Colonel. "You may go through the world very honourably without reading any of the books I have been talking of, and some of them might give you more pleasure than profit."

"I know more about horses and dogs than Greek and Latin, sir. We most of us do in Virginia," said Mr. Warrington.

"You are like the Persians; you can ride and speak the truth."

"Are the Prussians very good on horseback, sir? I hope I shall see their king and a campaign or two, either with 'em or against 'em," remarked Colonel Lambert's guest. Why did Miss Theo look at her mother, and why did that good woman's face assume a sad expression?

Why? Because young lasses are bred in humdrum country towns, do you suppose they never indulge in romances? Because they are modest and have never quitted mother's apron, do you suppose they have no thoughts of their own? What happens in spite of all those precautions which the King and Queen take for their darling princess, those dragons, and that impenetrable forest, and that castle of steel? The fairy prince penetrates the impenetrable forest, finds the weak point in the dragon's scale armour, and gets the better of all the ogres who guard the castle of steel. Away goes the princess to him. She knew him at once. Her bandboxes and portmanteaux are filled with her best clothes and all her jewels. She has been ready ever so long!

That is in fairy tales, you understand—where the blessed hour and youth always arrive, the ivory horn is blown at the castle-gate; and far off in her beauteous bower the princess hears it, and starts up, and knows that there is the right champion. He is always ready. Look! how the giants' heads tumble off as, falchion in hand, he gallops over the bridge on his white charger! How should that virgin, locked up in that inaccessible fortress, where she has never seen any man that was not

eighty, or hump-backed, or her father, know that there were such beings in the world as young men? I suppose there's an instinct. I suppose there's a season. I never spoke for my part to a fairy princess, or heard as much from any unenchanted or enchanting maiden. Ne'er a one of them has ever whispered her pretty little secrets to me, or perhaps confessed them to herself, her mamma, or her nearest and dearest confidante. But they *will* fall in love. Their little hearts are constantly throbbing at the window of expectancy on the look-out for the champion. They are always hearing his horn. They are for ever on the tower looking out for the hero. Sister Ann, Sister Ann, do you see him? Surely 'tis a knight with curling moustaches, a flashing scimitar, and a suit of silver armour. Oh, no! it is only a costermonger with his donkey and a pannier of cabbage! Sister Ann, Sister Ann, what is that cloud of dust? Oh, it is only a farmer's man driving a flock of pigs from market. Sister Ann, Sister Ann, who is that splendid warrior advancing in scarlet and gold? He nears the castle, he clears the drawbridge, he lifts the ponderous hammer at the gate. Ah me, he knocks twice! 'Tis only the postman with a double letter from Northamptonshire! So it is we make false starts in life. I don't believe there is any such thing known as first love—not within man's or woman's memory. No male or female remembers his or her first inclination any more than his or her own christening. What? You fancy that your sweet mistress, your spotless spinster, your blank maiden just out of the school-room, never cared for any but you? And she tells you so? Oh, you idiot! When she was four years old she had a tender feeling towards the Buttons who brought the coals up to the nursery, or the

little sweep at the crossing, or the music-master, or never mind whom. She had a secret longing towards her brother's schoolfellow, or the third charity boy at church, and if occasion had served, the comedy enacted with you had been performed along with another. I do not mean to say that she confessed this amatory sentiment, but that she had it. Lay down this page, and think how many and many and many a time you were in love before you selected the present Mrs. Jones as the partner of your name and affections!

So, from the way in which Theo held her head down, and exchanged looks with her mother, when poor unconscious Harry called the Persians the Prussians, and talked of serving a campaign with them, I make no doubt she was feeling ashamed, and thinking within herself, "Is this the hero with whom my mamma and I have been in love for these twenty-four hours, and whom we have endowed with every perfection? How beautiful, pale, and graceful he looked yesterday as he lay on the ground! How his curls fell over his face! How sad it was to see his poor white arm, and the blood trickling from it when papa bled him! And now he is well and amongst us, he is handsome certainly, but oh, is it possible he is—he is stupid?" When she lighted the lamp and looked at him, did Psyche find Cupid out; and is that the meaning of the old allegory? The wings of love drop off at this discovery. The fancy can no more soar and disport in skiey regions, the beloved object ceases at once to be celestial, and remains plodding on earth, entirely unromantic and substantial.

CHAPTER XXIII

HOLIDAYS

MRS. LAMBERT'S little day-dream was over. Miss Theo and her mother were obliged to confess in their hearts that their hero was but an ordinary mortal. They uttered few words on the subject, but each knew the other's thoughts as people who love each other do; and mamma, by an extra tenderness and special caressing manner towards her daughter, sought to console her for her disappointment. "Never mind, my dear"—the maternal kiss whispered on the filial cheek—"our hero has turned out to be but an ordinary mortal, and none such is good enough for my Theo. Thou shalt have a real husband ere long, if there be one in England. Why, I was scarce fifteen when your father saw me at the Bury Assembly, and while I was yet at school, I used to vow that I never would have any other man. If heaven gave me such a husband—the best man in

the whole kingdom—sure it will bless my child equally, who deserves a king, if she fancies him!" Indeed, I am not sure that Mrs. Lambert—who, of course, knew the age of the Prince of Wales, and was aware how handsome and good a young prince he was—did not expect that he too would come riding by her gate, and perhaps tumble down from his horse there, and be taken into the house, and be cured, and cause his royal grandpapa to give Martin Lambert a regiment, and fall in love with Theo.

The Colonel, for his part, and his second daughter Miss Hetty, were on the laughing, scornful, unbelieving side. Mamma was always match-making. Indeed, Mrs. Lambert was much addicted to novels, and cried her eyes out over them with great assiduity. No coach ever passed the gate, but she expected a husband for her girls would alight from it and ring the bell. As for Miss Hetty, she allowed her tongue to wag in a more than usually saucy way: she made a hundred sly allusions to their guest. She introduced Prussia and Persia into their conversation with abominable pertness and frequency. She asked whether the present King of Prussia was called the Shaw or the Sophy, and how far it was from Ispahan to Saxony, which his Majesty was at present invading, and about which war papa was so busy with his maps and his newspapers. She brought down the "Persian Tales" from her mamma's closet, and laid them slily on the table in the parlour where the family sat. *She* would not marry a Persian prince for her part; she would prefer a gentleman who might not have more than one wife at a time. She called our young Virginian Theo's gentleman, Theo's prince. She asked mamma if she wished her, Hetty, to take the other

visitor, the black prince, for herself? Indeed, she rallied her sister and her mother unceasingly on their sentimentalities, and would never stop until she had made them angry, when she would begin to cry herself, and kiss them violently one after the other, and coax them back into good humour. Simple Harry Warrington, meanwhile, knew nothing of all the jokes, the tears, quarrels, reconciliations, hymeneal plans, and so forth, of which he was the innocent occasion. A hundred allusions to the Prussians and Persians were shot at him, and those Parthian arrows did not penetrate his hide at all. A Shaw? A Sophy? Very likely he thought a Sophy was a lady, and would have deemed it the height of absurdity that a man with a great black beard should have any such name. We fall into the midst of a quiet family: we drop like a stone, say, into a pool,—we are perfectly compact and cool, and little know the flutter and excitement we make there, disturbing the fish, frightening the ducks, and agitating the whole surface of the water. How should Harry know the effect which his sudden appearance produced in this little quiet sentimental family? He thought quite well enough of himself on many points, but was diffident as yet regarding women, being of that age when young gentlemen require encouragement and to be brought forward, and having been brought up at home in very modest and primitive relations towards the other sex. So Miss Hetty's jokes played round the lad, and he minded them no more than so many summer gnats. It was not that he was stupid, as she certainly thought him: he was simple, too much occupied with himself and his own private affairs to think of others. Why, what tragedies, comedies, interludes, intrigues, farces, are going on

under our noses in friends' drawing-rooms where we visit every day, and we remain utterly ignorant, self-satisfied, and blind! As these sisters sat and combed their flowing ringlets of nights, or talked with each other in the great bed where, according to the fashion of the day, they lay together, how should Harry know that he had so great a share in their thoughts, jokes, conversation? Three days after his arrival, his new and hospitable friends were walking with him in my Lord Wrotham's fine park, where they were free to wander; and here, on a piece of water, they came to some swans, which the young ladies were in the habit of feeding with bread. As the birds approached the young women, Hetty said, with a queer look at her mother and sister, and then a glance at her father, who stood by, honest, happy, in a red waistcoat,—Hetty said: "Mamma's swans are something like these, papa."

"What swans, my dear?" says mamma.

"Something like, but not quite. They have shorter necks than these, and are, scores of them, on our common," continues Miss Hetty. "I saw Betty plucking one in the kitchen this morning. We shall have it for dinner, with apple-sauce and—"

"Don't be a little goose!" says Miss Theo.

"And sage and onions. Do you love swan, Mr. Warrington?"

"I shot three last winter on our river," said the Virginian gentleman. "Ours are not such white birds as these—they eat very well, though." The simple youth had not the slightest idea that he himself was an allegory at that very time, and that Miss Hetty was narrating a fable regarding him. In some exceedingly recondite Latin work I have read that, long before Virginia

was discovered, other folks were equally dull of comprehension.

So it was a premature sentiment on the part of Miss Theo—that little tender flutter of the bosom which we have acknowledged she felt on first beholding the Virginian, so handsome, pale, and bleeding. *This* was not the great passion which she knew her heart could feel. Like the birds, it had wakened and begun to sing at a false dawn. Hop back to thy perch, and cover thy head with thy wing, thou tremulous little fluttering creature! It is not yet light, and roosting is as yet better than singing. Anon will come morning, and the whole sky will redden, and you shall soar up into it and salute the sun with your music.

One little phrase, some three-and-thirty lines back, perhaps the fair and suspicious reader has remarked: "*Three days after his arrival,* Harry was walking with," &c. &c. If he could walk—which it appeared he could do perfectly well—what business had he to be walking with anybody but Lady Maria Esmond on the Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells? His shoulder was set: his health was entirely restored: he had not even a change of coats, as we have seen, and was obliged to the Colonel for his raiment. Surely a young man in such a condition had no right to be lingering on at Oakhurst, and was bound by every tie of duty and convenience, by love, by relationship, by a gentle heart waiting for him, by the washerwoman finally, to go to Tunbridge. Why did he stay behind, unless he was in love with either of the young ladies? (and we say he wasn't.) Could it be that he did not want to go? Hath the gracious reader understood the meaning of the mystic S with which the last chapter commences and in which the designer has feebly endeavoured to depict the notorious Sindbad the

Sailor surmounted by that odious old man of the sea? What if Harry Warrington should be that sailor, and his fate that choking, deadening, inevitable old man? What if for two days past he has felt those knees throttling him round the neck? if his fell aunt's purpose is answered, and if his late love is killed as dead by her poisonous communications as Fair Rosamond was by her royal and legitimate rival? Is Hero then lighting the lamp up, and getting ready the supper, whilst Leander is sitting comfortably with some other party, and never in the least thinking of taking to the water? Ever since that coward's blow was struck in Lady Maria's back by her own relative, surely kind hearts must pity her ladyship. I know she has faults—ay, and wears false hair and false never mind what. But a woman in distress, shall we not pity her—a lady of a certain age, are we going to laugh at her because of her years? Between her old aunt and her unhappy delusion, be sure my Lady Maria Esmond is having no very pleasant time of it at Tunbridge Wells. There is no one to protect her. Madame Beatrix has her all to herself. Lady Maria is poor, and hopes for money from her aunt. Lady Maria has a secret or two which the old woman knows, and brandishes over her. I for one am quite melted and grow soft-hearted as I think of her. Imagine her alone, and a victim to that old woman! Paint to yourself that antique Andromeda (if you please we will allow that rich flowing head of hair to fall over her shoulders) chained to a rock on Mount Ephraim, and given up to that dragon of a Baroness! Succour, Perseus! Come quickly with thy winged feet and flashing falchion! Perseus is not in the least hurry. The dragon has her will of Andromeda for day after day.

Harry Warrington, who would not have allowed his

dislocated and mended shoulder to keep him from going out hunting, remained day after day contentedly at Oakhurst, with each day finding the kindly folks who welcomed him more to his liking. Perhaps he had never, since his grandfather's death, been in such good company. His lot had lain amongst fox-hunting Virginian squires, with whose society he had put up very contentedly, riding their horses, living their lives, and sharing their punch-bowls. The ladies of his own and mother's acquaintance were very well bred, and decorous, and pious, no doubt, but somewhat narrow-minded. It was but a little place, his home, with its pompous ways, small etiquettes and punctilios, small flatteries, small conversations and scandals. Until he had left the place some time after, he did not know how narrow and confined his life had been there. He was free enough personally. He had dogs and horses, and might shoot and hunt for scores of miles round about: but the little lady mother domineered at home, and when there he had to submit to her influence and breathe her air.

Here the lad found himself in the midst of a circle where everything about him was incomparably gayer, brighter, and more free. He was living with a man and woman who had seen the world, though they lived retired from it, who had both of them happened to enjoy from their earliest times the use not only of good books, but of good company—those live books, which are such pleasant and sometimes such profitable reading. Society has this good at least: that it lessens our conceit, by teaching us our insignificance, and making us acquainted with our betters. If you are a young person who read this, depend upon it, sir or madam, there is nothing more wholesome for you than to acknowledge

and to associate with your superiors. If I could, I would not have my son Thomas first Greek and Latin prize boy, first oar, and cock of the school. Better for his soul's and body's welfare that he should have a good place, not the first—a fair set of competitors round about him, and a good thrashing now and then, with a hearty shake afterwards of the hand which administered the beating. What honest man that can choose his lot would be a prince, let us say, and have all society walking backwards before him, only obsequious household-gentlemen to talk to, and all mankind mum except when your High Mightiness asks a question and gives permission to speak? One of the great benefits which Harry Warrington received from this family, before whose gate Fate had shot him, was to begin to learn that he was a profoundly ignorant young fellow, and that there were many people in the world far better than he knew himself to be. Arrogant a little with some folks, in the company of his superiors he was magnanimously docile. We have seen how faithfully he admired his brother at home, and his friend, the gallant young Colonel of Mount Vernon: of the gentlemen his kinsmen at Castlewood, he had felt himself at least the equal. In his new acquaintance at Oakhurst he found a man who had read far more books than Harry could pretend to judge of, who had seen the world and come unwounded out of it, as he had out of the dangers and battles which he had confronted, and who had goodness and honesty written on his face and breathing from his lips, for which qualities our brave lad had always an instinctive sympathy and predilection.

As for the women, they were the kindest, merriest, most agreeable he had as yet known. They were pleas-

anter than Parson Broadbent's black-eyed daughter at home, whose laugh carried as far as a gun. They were quite as well-bred as the Castlewood ladies, with the exception of Madam Beatrix (who, indeed, was as grand as an empress on some occasions). But somehow, after a talk with Madam Beatrix, and vast amusement and interest in her stories, the lad would come away as with a bitter taste in his mouth, and fancy all the world wicked round about him. The Lamberts were not squeamish; and laughed over pages of Mr. Fielding, and cried over volumes of Mr. Richardson, containing jokes and incidents which would make Mrs. Grundy's hair stand on end, yet their merry prattle left no bitterness behind it; their tales about this neighbour and that were droll, not malicious; the curtseys and salutations with which the folks of the little neighbouring town received them, how kindly and cheerful! their bounties how cordial! Of a truth it is good to be with good people. How good Harry Warrington did not know at the time, perhaps, or until subsequent experience showed him contrasts, or caused him to feel remorse. Here was a tranquil, sunshiny day of a life that was to be agitated and stormy—a happy hour or two to remember. Not much happened during the happy hour or two. It was only sweet sleep, pleasant waking, friendly welcome, serene pastime. The gates of the old house seemed to shut the wicked world out somehow, and the inhabitants within to be better, and purer, and kinder than other people. He was not in love. Oh, no! not the least, either with saucy Hetty or generous Theodosia: but when the time came for going away, he fastened on both their hands, and felt an immense regard for them. He thought he should like to know their brothers, and that

they must be fine fellows; and as for Mrs. Lambert, I believe she was as sentimental at his departure as if he had been the last volume of Clarissa Harlowe.

"He is very kind and honest," said Theo, gravely, as, looking from the terrace, they saw him and their father and servants riding away on the road to Westerham.

"I don't think him stupid at all now," said little Hetty; "and, mamma, I think he is very like a swan indeed."

"It felt just like one of the boys going to school," said mamma.

"Just like it," said Theo, sadly.

"I am glad he has got papa to ride with him to Westerham," resumed Miss Hetty, "and that he bought Farmer Briggs's horse. I don't like his going to those Castlewood people. I am sure that Madame Bernstein is a wicked old woman. I expected to see her ride away on her crooked stick."

"Hush, Hetty!"

"Do you think she would float if they tried her in the pond as poor old Mother Hely did at Elmhurst? The other old woman seemed fond of him—I mean the one with the fair *tour*. She looked very melancholy when she went away; but Madame Bernstein whisked her off with her crutch, and she was obliged to go. I don't care, Theo. I *know* she is a wicked woman. You think everybody good, you do, because you never do anything wrong yourself."

"My Theo *is* a good girl," says the mother, looking fondly at both her daughters.

"Then why do we call her a miserable sinner?"

"We are all so, my love," said mamma.

"What, papa too? You know you don't think so,"

cries Miss Hester. And to allow this was almost more than Mrs. Lambert could afford.

"What was that you told John to give to Mr. Warrington's black man?"

Mamma owned, with some shamefacedness, it was a bottle of her cordial water and a cake which she had bid Betty make. "I feel quite like a mother to him, my dears, I can't help owning it,—and you know both our boys still like one of our cakes to take to school or college with them."

CHAPTER XXIV

FROM OAKHURST TO TUNBRIDGE

HAVING her lily handkerchief in token of adieu to the departing travellers, Mrs. Lambert and her girls watched them pacing leisurely on the first few hundred yards of their journey, and until such time as a tree-clumped corner of the road hid them from the ladies' view. Behind that clump of limes the good matron had many a time watched those she loved best disappear. Husband departing to battle and danger, sons to school, each after the other had gone on his way behind yonder green trees, returning as it pleased heaven's will at his good time, and bringing pleasure and love back to the happy little family. Besides their own instinctive nature (which to be sure aids wonderfully in the matter), the leisure and contemplation attendant upon their

home life serve to foster the tenderness and fidelity of our women. The men gone, there is all day to think about them, and to-morrow and to-morrow—when there certainly will be a letter—and so on. There is the vacant room to go look at, where the boy slept last night, and the impression of his carpet-bag is still on the bed. There is his whip hung up in the hall, and his fishing-rod and basket—mute memorials of the brief bygone pleasures. At dinner there comes up that cherry-tart, half of which our darling ate at two o'clock in spite of his melancholy, and with a choking little sister on each side of him. The evening prayer is said without that young scholar's voice to utter the due responses. Midnight and silence come, and the good mother lies wakeful, thinking how one of the dear accustomed brood is away from the nest. Morn breaks, home and holidays have passed away, and toil and labour have begun for him. So those rustling limes formed, as it were, a screen between the world and our ladies of the house at Oakhurst. Kind-hearted Mrs. Lambert always became silent and thoughtful, if by chance she and her girls walked up to the trees in the absence of the men of the family. She said she would like to carve their names upon the grey silvered trunks, in the midst of true-lovers' knots, as was then the kindly fashion; and Miss Theo, who had an exceeding elegant turn that way, made some verses regarding the trees, which her delighted parent transmitted to a periodical of those days.

"Now we are out of sight of the ladies," says Colonel Lambert, giving a parting salute with his hat, as the pair of gentlemen trotted past the limes in question. "I know my wife always watches at her window until we are round this corner. I hope we shall have you seeing

Farewell

the trees and the house again, Mr. Warrington; and the boys being at home, mayhap there will be better sport for you."

"I never want to be happier, sir, than I have been," replied Mr. Warrington; "and I hope you will let me say, that I feel as if I am leaving quite old friends behind me."

"The friend at whose house we shall sup to-night hath a son, who is an old friend of our family, too, and my wife, who is an inveterate marriage-monger, would have made a match between him and one of my girls, but that the Colonel hath chosen to fall in love with somebody else."

"Ah!" sighed Mr. Warrington.

"Other folks have done the same thing. There were brave fellows before Agamemnon."

"I beg your pardon, sir. Is the gentleman's name—Aga—? I did not quite gather it," meekly inquired the younger traveller.

"No, his name is James Wolfe," cried the Colonel, smiling. "He is a young fellow still, or what we call so, being scarce thirty years old. He is the youngest lieutenant-colonel in the army, unless, to be sure, we except a few scores of our nobility, who take rank before us common folk."

"Of course, of course!" says the Colonel's young companion, with true colonial notions of aristorcratic precedence.

"And I have seen him commanding captains, and very brave captains, who were thirty years his seniors, and who had neither his merit nor his good fortune. But, lucky as he hath been, no one envies his superiority, for, indeed, most of us acknowledge that he is our superior.

He is beloved by every man of our old regiment, and knows every one of them. He is a good scholar as well as a consummate soldier, and a master of many languages."

"Ah, sir!" said Harry Warrington, with a sigh of great humility; "I feel that I have neglected my own youth sadly; and am come to England but an ignoramus. Had my dear brother been alive, he would have represented our name and our colony, too, better than I can do. George was a scholar; George was a musician; George could talk with the most learned people in our country, and I make no doubt would have held his own here. Do you know, sir, I am glad to have come home, and to you especially, if but to learn how ignorant I am."

"If you know that well, 'tis a great gain already," said the Colonel, with a smile.

"At home, especially of late, and since we lost my brother, I used to think myself a mighty fine fellow, and have no doubt that the folks round about flattered me. I am wiser now,—that is, I hope I am,—though perhaps I am wrong, and only bragging again. But you see, sir, the gentry in our colony don't know very much, except about dogs and horses, and betting and games. I wish I knew more about books, and less about them."

"Nay. Dogs and horses are very good books, too, in their way, and we may read a deal of truth out of 'em. Some men are not made to be scholars, and may be very worthy citizens and gentlemen in spite of their ignorance. What call have all of us to be especially learned or wise, or to take a first place in the world? His Royal Highness is commander, and Martin Lambert is colonel, and Jack Hunt, who rides behind yonder, was a private sol-

dier, and is now a very honest, worthy groom. So as we all do our best in our station, it matters not much whether that be high or low. Nay, how do we know what is high and what is low? and whether Jack's curry-comb, or my epaulets, or his Royal Highness's baton, may not turn out to be pretty equal? When I began life, *et militavi non sine*—never mind what—I dreamed of success and honour; now I think of duty, and yonder folks, from whom we parted a few hours ago. Let us trot on, else we shall not reach Westerham before nightfall."

At Westerham the two friends were welcomed by their hosts, a stately matron, an old soldier, whose recollections and services were of five and forty years back, and the son of this gentleman and lady, the Lieutenant-Colonel of Kingsley's regiment, that was then stationed at Maidstone, whence the Colonel had come over on a brief visit to his parents. Harry looked with some curiosity at this officer, who, young as he was, had seen so much service, and obtained a character so high. There was little of the beautiful in his face. He was very lean and very pale; his hair was red, his nose and cheek-bones were high; but he had a fine courtesy towards his elders, a cordial greeting towards his friends, and an animation in conversation which caused those who heard him to forget, even to admire his homely looks.

Mr. Warrington was going to Tunbridge? Their James would bear him company, the lady of the house said, and whispered something to Colonel Lambert at supper, which occasioned smiles and a knowing wink or two from that officer. He called for wine, and toasted "Miss Lowther." "With all my heart," cried the enthusiastic Colonel James, and drained his glass to the very last drop. Mamma whispered her friend how James and

the lady were going to make a match, and how she came of the famous Lowther family of the North.

"If she was the daughter of King Charlemagne," cries Lambert, "she is not too good for James Wolfe, or for his mother's son."

"Mr. Lambert would not say so if he knew her," the young Colonel declared.

"Oh, of course, she is the priceless pearl, and you are nothing," cries mamma. "No. I am of Colonel Lambert's opinion; and, if she brought all Cumberland to you for a jointure, I should say it was my James's due. That is the way with 'em, Mr. Warrington. We tend our children through fevers, and measles, and whooping-cough, and small-pox; we send them to the army and can't sleep at night for thinking; we break our hearts at parting with 'em, and have them at home only for a week or two in the year, or maybe ten years, and, after all our care, there comes a lass with a pair of bright eyes, and away goes our boy, and never cares a fig for us afterwards."

"And pray, my dear, how did you come to marry James's papa?" said the elder Colonel Wolfe. "And why didn't you stay at home with your parents?"

"Because James's papa was gouty, and wanted somebody to take care of him, I suppose; not because I liked him a bit," answers the lady: and so with much easy talk and kindness the evening passed away.

On the morrow, and with many expressions of kindness and friendship for his late guest, Colonel Lambert gave over the young Virginian to Mr. Wolfe's charge, and turned his horse's head homewards, while the two gentlemen sped towards Tunbridge Wells. Wolfe was in a hurry to reach the place; Harry Warrington was,

perhaps, not quite so eager: nay, when Lambert rode towards his own home, Harry's thoughts followed him with a great deal of longing desire to the parlour at Oakhurst, where he had spent three days in happy calm. Mr. Wolfe agreed in all Harry's enthusiastic praises of Mr. Lambert, and of his wife, and of his daughters, and of all that excellent family. "To have such a good name, and to live such a life as Colonel Lambert's," said Wolfe, "seem to me now the height of human ambition."

"And glory and honour?" asked Warrington. "Are those nothing? and would you give up the winning of them?"

"They were my dreams once," answered the Colonel, who had now different ideas of happiness, "and now my desires are much more tranquil. I have followed arms ever since I was fourteen years of age. I have seen almost every kind of duty connected with my calling. I know all the garrison towns in this country, and have had the honour to serve wherever there has been work to be done during the last ten years. I have done pretty near the whole of a soldier's duty, except, indeed, the command of an army, which can hardly be hoped for by one of my years; and now, methinks, I would like quiet, books to read, a wife to love me, and some children to dandle on my knee. I have imagined some such Elysium for myself, Mr. Warrington. True love is better than glory; and a tranquil fireside, with the woman of your heart seated by it, the greatest good the gods can send to us."

Harry imagined to himself the picture which his comrade called up. He said "Yes" in answer to the other's remark; but, no doubt, did not give a very cheerful as-

sent, for his companion observed upon the expression of his face.

"You say 'Yes' as if a fireside and a sweetheart were not particularly to your taste."

"Why, look you, Colonel; there are other things which a young fellow might like to enjoy. You have had sixteen years of the world: and I am but a few months away from my mother's apron-strings. When I have seen a campaign or two, or six, as you have: when I have distinguished myself like Mr. Wolfe, and made the world talk of me, I then may think of retiring from it."

To these remarks, Mr. Wolfe, whose heart was full of a very different matter, replied by breaking out in a farther encomium of the joys of marriage; and a special rhapsody upon the beauties and merits of his mistress—a theme intensely interesting to himself, though not so, possibly, to his hearer, whose views regarding a married life, if he permitted himself to entertain any, were somewhat melancholy and despondent. A pleasant afternoon brought them to the end of their ride: nor did any accident or incident accompany it, save, perhaps, a mistake which Harry Warrington made at some few miles' distance from Tunbridge Wells, where two horsemen stopped them, whom Harry was for charging, pistol in hand, supposing them to be highwaymen. Colonel Wolfe, laughing, bade Mr. Warrington reserve his fire, for these folks were only innkeepers' agents, and not robbers (except in their calling). Gumbo, whose horse ran away with him at this particular juncture, was brought back after a great deal of bawling on his master's part, and the two gentlemen rode into the little town, alighted at their inn, and then separated, each in quest of the ladies whom he had come to visit.

Mr. Warrington found his aunt installed in handsome lodgings, with a guard of London lacqueys in her anteroom, and to follow her chair when she went abroad. She received him with the utmost kindness. His cousin, my Lady Maria, was absent when he arrived: I don't know whether the young gentleman was unhappy at not seeing her; or whether he disguised his feelings, or whether Madame de Bernstein took any note regarding them.

A beau in a rich figured suit, the first specimen of the kind Harry had seen, and two dowagers with voluminous hoops and plenty of rouge, were on a visit to the Baroness when her nephew made his bow to her. She introduced the young man to these personages as her nephew, the young Crœsus out of Virginia, of whom they had heard. She talked about the immensity of his estate, which was as large as Kent; and, as she had read, infinitely more fruitful. She mentioned how her half-sister, Madam Esmond, was called Princess Pocahontas in her own country. She never tired in her praises of mother and son, of their riches and their good qualities. The beau shook the young man by the hand, and was delighted to have the honour to make his acquaintance. The ladies praised him to his aunt so loudly that the modest youth was fain to blush at their compliments. They went away to inform the Tunbridge society of the news of his arrival. The little place was soon buzzing with accounts of the wealth, the good breeding, and the good looks of the Virginian.

"You could not have come at a better moment, my dear," the Baroness said to her nephew, as her visitors departed with many curtseys and congees. "Those three individuals have the most active tongues in the Wells.

They will trumpet your good qualities in every company where they go. I have introduced you to a hundred people already, and, heaven help me! have told all sorts of fibs about the geography of Virginia in order to describe your estate. It *is* a prodigious large one, but I am afraid I have magnified it. I have filled it with all sorts of wonderful animals, gold mines, spices; I am not sure I have not said diamonds. As for your negroes, I have given your mother armies of them; and, in fact, represented her as a sovereign princess reigning over a magnificent dominion. So she *has* a magnificent dominion: I cannot tell to a few hundred thousand pounds how much her yearly income is, but I have no doubt it is a very great one. And you must prepare, sir, to be treated here as the heir-apparent of this royal lady. Do not let your head be turned! From this day forth you are going to be flattered as you have never been flattered in your life."

"And to what end, Ma'am?" asked the young gentleman. "I see no reason why I should be reputed so rich, or get so much flattery."

"In the first place, sir, you must not contradict your old aunt, who has no desire to be made a fool of before her company. And as for your reputation, you must know we found it here almost ready-made on our arrival. A London newspaper has somehow heard of you, and come out with a story of the immense wealth of a young gentleman from Virginia lately landed, and a cousin of my Lord Castlewood. Immensely wealthy you are, and can't help yourself. All the world is eager to see you. You shall go to church to-morrow morning, and see how the whole congregation will turn away from its books and prayers, to worship the golden calf in your

person. You would not have had me undeceive them, would you, and speak ill of my own flesh and blood?"

"But how am I bettered by this reputation for money?" asked Harry.

"You are making your entry into the world, and the gold key will open most of its doors to you. To be thought rich is as good as to be rich. You need not spend much money. People will say that you hoard it, and your reputation for avarice will do you good rather than harm. You'll see how the mothers will smile upon you, and the daughters will curtsey! Don't look surprised! When I was a young woman myself I did as all the rest of the world did, and tried to better myself by more than one desperate attempt at a good marriage. Your poor grandmother, who was a saint upon earth to be sure, bating a little jealousy, used to scold me, and called me worldly. Worldly, my dear! So is the world worldly; and we must serve it as it serves us; and give it nothing for nothing. Mr. Henry Esmond Warrington—I can't help loving the two first names, sir, old woman as I am, and that I tell you—on coming here or to London, would have been nobody. Our protection would have helped him but little. Our family has little credit, and, *entre nous*, not much reputation. I suppose you know that Castlewood was more than suspected in '45, and hath since ruined himself by play?"

Harry had never heard about Lord Castlewood or his reputation.

"He never had much to lose, but he has lost that and more: his wretched estate is eaten up with mortgages. He has been at all sorts of schemes to raise money:—my dear, he has been so desperate at times, that I did not think my diamonds were safe with him; and have

travelled to and from Castlewood without them. Terrible, isn't it, to speak so of one's own nephew? But you are my nephew, too, and not spoiled by the world yet, and I wish to warn you of its wickedness. I heard of your play-doings with Will and the chaplain, but they could do you no harm,—nay, I am told you had the better of them. Had you played with Castlewood, you would have had no such luck: and you *would* have played, had not an old aunt of yours warned my Lord Castlewood to keep his hands off you."

"What, Ma'am, did you interfere to preserve me?"

"I kept his clutches off from you: be thankful that you are come out of that ogre's den with any flesh on your bones! My dear, it has been the rage and passion of all our family. My poor silly brother played; both his wives played, especially the last one, who has little else to live upon now but her nightly assemblies in London, and the money for the cards. I would not trust her at Castlewood alone with you: the passion is too strong for them, and they would fall upon you, and fleece you; and then fall upon each other, and fight for the plunder. But for his place about the Court my poor nephew hath nothing, and that is Will's fortune, too, sir, and Maria's and her sister's."

"And are they, too, fond of the cards?"

"No; to do poor Molly justice, gaming is not her passion; but when she is amongst them in London, little Fanny will bet her eyes out of her head. I know what the passion is, sir: do not look so astonished; I have had it, as I had the measles when I was a child. I am not cured quite. For a poor old woman is nothing left but that. You will see some high play at my card-tables to-night. Hush! my dear. It was that I wanted, and

without which I moped so at Castlewood! I could not win of my nieces or their mother. They would not pay if they lost. 'Tis best to warn you, my dear, in time, lest you should be shocked by the discovery. I can't live without the cards, there's the truth."

A few days before, and while staying with his Castlewood relatives, Harry, who loved cards, and cock-fighting, and betting, and every conceivable sport himself, would have laughed very likely at this confession. Amongst that family into whose society he had fallen, many things were laughed at, over which some folks looked grave. Faith and honour were laughed at; pure lives were disbelieved; selfishness was proclaimed as common practice; sacred duties were sneeringly spoken of, and vice flippantly condoned. These were no Pharisees: they professed no hypocrisy of virtue, they flung no stones at discovered sinners:—they smiled, shrugged their shoulders, and passed on. The members of this family did not pretend to be a whit better than their neighbours, whom they despised heartily; they lived quite familiarly with the folks about whom and whose wives they told such wicked, funny stories; they took their share of what pleasure or plunder came to hand, and lived from day to day till their last day came for them. Of course there are no such people now; and human nature is very much changed in the last hundred years. At any rate, card-playing is greatly out of mode: about *that* there can be no doubt; and very likely there are not six ladies of fashion in London, who know the difference between Spadille and Manille.

"How dreadfully dull you must have found those humdrum people at that village where we left you—but the savages were very kind to you, child!" said

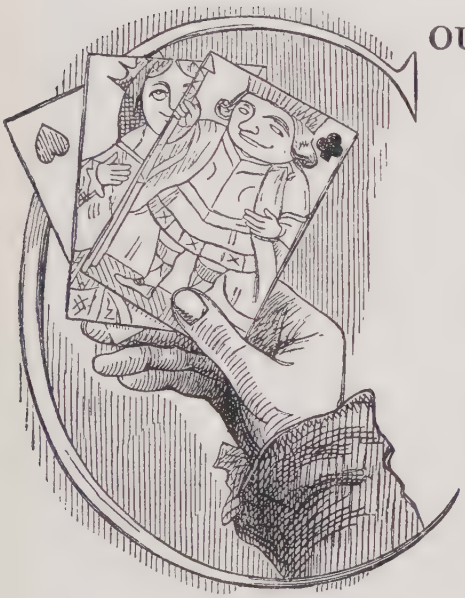
Madame de Bernstein, patting the young man's cheek with her pretty old hand.

"They were very kind; and it was not at all dull, Ma'am, and I think they are some of the best people in the world," said Harry, with his face flushing up. His aunt's tone jarred upon him. He could not bear that any one should speak or think lightly of the new friends whom he had found. He did not want them in such company.

The old lady, imperious and prompt to anger, was about to resent the check she had received, but a second thought made her pause. "Those two girls," she thought, "a sick-bed—an interesting stranger—of course he has been falling in love with one of them." Madame Bernstein looked round with a mischievous glance at Lady Maria, who entered the room at this juncture.

CHAPTER XXV

NEW ACQUAINTANCES



COUSIN MARIA made her appearance, attended by a couple of gardener's boys bearing baskets of flowers, with which it was proposed to decorate Madame de Bernstein's drawing-room against the arrival of her ladyship's company. Three footmen in livery, gorgeously laced with worsted, set out twice as many card-tables. A major-domo in black and a bag, with fine laced ruffles, and looking as if he ought to have a sword by his side, followed the lacqueys bearing fasces of wax-candles, of which he placed a pair on each card-table, and in the silver sconces on the wainscoted wall that was now gilt with the slanting rays of the sun, as was the prospect of the green common beyond, with its rocks and clumps of trees and houses twinkling in the sunshine. Groups of many-coloured figures in hoops and powder and brocade sauntered over the green, and dappled the plain with their

shadows. On the other side from the Baroness's windows you saw the Pantiles, where a perpetual fair was held, and heard the clatter and buzzing of the company. A band of music was here performing for the benefit of the visitors to the Wells. Madame Bernstein's chief sitting-room might not suit a recluse or a student, but for those who liked bustle, gaiety, a bright cross light, and a view of all that was going on in the cheery busy place, no lodging could be pleasanter. And when the windows were lighted up, the passengers walking below were aware that her ladyship was at home and holding a card-assembly, to which an introduction was easy enough. By the way, in speaking of the past, I think the night-life of society a hundred years since was rather a *dark* life. There was not one wax-candle for ten which we now see in a lady's drawing-room: let alone gas and the wondrous new illuminations of clubs. Horrible guttering tallow smoked and stunk in passages. The candle-snuffer was a notorious officer in the theatre. See Hogarth's pictures: how dark they are, and how his feasts are, as it were, begrimed with tallow! In "Marriage à la Mode," in Lord Viscount Squanderfield's grand saloons, where he and his wife are sitting yawning before the horror-stricken steward when their party is over—there are but eight candles—one on each card-table, and half-a-dozen in a brass chandelier. If Jack Briefless convoked his friends to oysters and beer in his chambers, Pump Court, he would have twice as many. Let us comfort ourselves by thinking that Louis Quatorze in all his glory held his revels in the dark, and bless Mr. Price and other Luciferous benefactors of mankind, for banishing the abominable mutton of our youth.

So Maria with her flowers (herself the fairest flower,)

popped her roses, sweetwilliams, and so forth, in vases here and there, and adorned the apartment to the best of her art. She lingered fondly over this bowl and that dragon jar, casting but sly timid glances the while at young Cousin Harry, whose own blush would have become any young woman, and you might have thought that she possibly intended to outstay her aunt; but that Baroness, seated in her arm-chair, her crooked tortoise-shell stick in her hand, pointed the servants imperiously to their duty; rated one and the other soundly: Tom for having a darn in his stocking; John for having greased his locks too profusely out of the candle-box; and so forth—keeping a stern domination over them. Another remark concerning poor Jeames of a hundred years ago: Jeames slept two in a bed, four in a room, and that room a cellar very likely, and he washed in a trough such as you would hardly see anywhere in London now out of the barracks of her Majesty's Foot Guards.

If Maria hoped a present interview, her fond heart was disappointed. "Where are you going to dine, Harry?" asks Madame de Bernstein. "My niece Maria and I shall have a chicken in the little parlour—I think you should go to the best ordinary. There is one at the 'White Horse' at three, we shall hear his bell in a minute or two. And you will understand, sir, that you ought not to spare expense, but behave like Princess Pocahontas's son. Your trunks have been taken over to the lodging I have engaged for you. It is not good for a lad to be always hanging about the aprons of two old women. Is it, Maria?"

"No," says her ladyship, dropping her meek eyes: whilst the other lady's glared in triumph. I think Andromeda had been a good deal exposed to the Dragon

in the course of the last five or six days: and if Perseus had cut the latter's cruel head off he would have committed not unjustifiable monstricide. But he did not bare sword or shield; he only looked mechanically at the lacqueys in tawny and blue as they creaked about the room.

"And there are good mercers and tailors from London always here to wait on the company at the Wells. You had better see them, my dear, for your suit is not of the very last fashion—a little lace—"

"I can't go out of mourning, Ma'am," said the young man, looking down at his sables.

"Ho, sir," cried the lady, rustling up from her chair and rising on her cane, "wear black for your brother till you are as old as Methuselah, if you like. I am sure I don't want to prevent you. I only want you to dress, and to do like other people, and make a figure worthy of your name."

"Madam," said Mr. Warrington with great state, "I have not done anything to disgrace it that I know."

Why did the old woman stop and give a little start as if she had been struck? Let bygones be bygones. She and the boy had a score of little passages of this kind in which swords were crossed and thrusts rapidly dealt or parried. She liked Harry none the worse for his courage in facing her. "Sure a little finer linen than that shirt you wear will not be a disgrace to you, sir," she said, with rather a forced laugh.

Harry bowed and blushed. It was one of the homely gifts of his Oakhurst friends. He felt pleased somehow to think he wore it; thought of the new friends, so good, so pure, so simple, so kindly, with immense tenderness, and felt, while invested in this garment, as if evil could

not touch him. He said he would go to his lodging, and make a point of returning arrayed in the best linen he had.

"Come back here, sir," said Madame Bernstein, "and if our company has not arrived, Maria and I will find some ruffles for you!" And herewith, under a footman's guidance, the young fellow walked off to his new lodgings.

Harry found not only handsome and spacious apartments provided for him, but a groom in attendance waiting to be engaged by his honour, and a second valet, if he was inclined to hire one to wait upon Mr. Gumbo. Ere he had been many minutes in his rooms, emissaries from a London tailor and bootmaker waited on him with the cards and compliments of their employers, Messrs. Regnier and Tull; the best articles in his modest wardrobe were laid out by Gumbo, and the finest linen with which his thrifty Virginian mother had provided him. Visions of the snow-surrounded home in his own country, of the crackling logs and the trim quiet ladies working by the fire, rose up before him. For the first time a little thought that the homely clothes were not quite smart enough, the home-worked linen not so fine as it might be, crossed the young man's mind. That he should be ashamed of anything belonging to him or to Castlewood! That was strange. The simple folks there were only too well satisfied with all things that were done or said or produced at Castlewood; and Madam Esmond, when she sent her son forth on his travels, thought no young nobleman need be better provided. The clothes might have fitted better and been of a later fashion, to be sure—but still the young fellow presented a comely figure enough when he issued from his apartments, his toilette

over; and Gumbo, calling a chair, marched beside it, until they reached the ordinary where the young gentleman was to dine.

Here he expected to find the beau whose acquaintance he had made a few hours before at his aunt's lodging, and who had indicated to Harry that the "White Horse" was the most modish place for dining at the Wells, and he mentioned his friend's name to the host: but the landlord and waiters leading him into the room with many smiles and bows assured his honour that his honour did not need any other introduction than his own, helped him to hang up his coat and sword on a peg, asked him whether he would drink Burgundy, Pontac, or Champagne to his dinner, and led him to a table.

Though the most fashionable ordinary in the village, the "White Horse" did not happen to be crowded on this day. Monsieur Barbeau, the landlord, informed Harry that there was a great entertainment at Summer Hill, which had taken away most of the company; indeed, when Harry entered the room, there were but four other gentlemen in it. Two of these guests were drinking wine, and had finished their dinner: the other two were young men in the midst of their meal, to whom the landlord, as he passed, must have whispered the name of the new comer, for they looked at him with some appearance of interest, and made him a slight bow across the table as the smiling host bustled away for Harry's dinner.

Mr. Warrington returned the salute of the two gentlemen who bade him welcome to Tunbridge, and hoped he would like the place upon better acquaintance. Then they smiled and exchanged waggish looks with each other, of which Harry did not understand the meaning,

nor why they cast knowing glances at the two other guests over their wine.

One of these persons was in a somewhat tarnished velvet coat with a huge queue and bag, and voluminous ruffles and embroidery. The other was a little beetle-browed, hook-nosed, high-shouldered gentleman, whom his opposite companion addressed as milor, or my lord, in a very high voice. My lord, who was sipping the wine before him, barely glanced at the new comer, and then addressed himself to his own companion.

"And so you know the nephew of the old woman—the Crœsus who comes to arrive?"

"You're thrown out there, Jack!" says one young gentleman to the other.

"Never could manage the lingo," said Jack. The two elders had begun to speak in the French language.

"But assuredly, my dear lord!" says the gentleman with the long queue.

"You have shown energy, my dear Baron! He has been here but two hours. My people told me of him only as I came to dinner."

"I knew him before!—I have met him often in London with the Baroness and my lord, his cousin," said the Baron.

A smoking soup for Harry here came in, borne by the smiling host. "Behold, sir! Behold a potage of my fashion!" says my landlord, laying down the dish and whispering to Harry the celebrated name of the nobleman opposite. Harry thanked Monsieur Barbeau in his own language, upon which the foreign gentleman, turning round, grinned most graciously at Harry, and said, "Fous bossedez notre langue barfaidement, Monsieur." Mr. Warrington had never heard the French language

pronounced in that manner in Canada. He bowed in return to the foreign gentleman.

"Tell me more about the Crœsus, my good Baron," continued his lordship, speaking rather superciliously to his companion, and taking no notice of Harry, which perhaps somewhat nettled the young man.

"What will you, that I tell you, my dear lord? Crœsus is a youth like other youths; he is tall, like other youths; he is awkward, like other youths; he has black hair, as they all have who come from the Indies. Lodgings have been taken for him at Mrs. Rose's toy-shop."

"I have lodgings there too," thought Mr. Warrington. "Who is Crœsus they are talking of? How good the soup is!"

"He travels with a large retinue," the Baron continued, "four servants, two postchaises, and a pair of outriders. His chief attendant is a black man who saved his life from the savages in America, and who will not hear, on any account, of being made free. He persists in wearing mourning for his elder brother from whom he inherits his principality."

"Could anything console you for the death of yours, Chevalier?" cried out the elder gentleman.

"Milor! his property might," said the Chevalier, "which you know is not small."

"Your brother lives on his patrimony—which you have told me is immense—you by your industry, my dear Chevalier."

"Milor!" cries the individual addressed as Chevalier.

"By your industry or your esprit,—how much more noble! Shall you be at the Baroness's to-night? She ought to be a little of your parents, Chevalier?"

"Again I fail to comprehend your lordship," said the other gentleman, rather sulkily.

"Why, she is a woman of great wit—she is of noble birth—she has undergone strange adventures—she has but little principle (there you happily have the advantage of her). But what care we men of the world? You intend to go and play with the young Creole, no doubt, and get as much money from him as you can. By the way, Baron, suppose he should be a *guet à pens,* that young Creole? Suppose our excellent friend has invented him up in London, and brings him down with his character for wealth to prey upon the innocent folks here?"

"J'y ai souvent pensé, Milor," says the little Baron, placing his finger to his nose very knowingly, "that Baroness is capable of anything."

"A Baron—a Baroness, que voulez-vous, my friend? I mean the late lamented husband. Do you know who he was?"

"Intimately. A more notorious villain never dealt a card. At Venice, at Brussels, at Spa, at Vienna—the gaols of every one of which places he knew. I knew the man, my lord."

"I thought you would. I saw him at the Hague, where I first had the honour of meeting you, and a more disreputable rogue never entered my doors. A Minister must open them to all sorts of people, Baron,—spies, sharpers, ruffians of every sort."

"Parbleu, Milor, how you treat them!" says my lord's companion.

"A man of my rank, my friend—of the rank I held then—of course, must see all sorts of people—entre

autres your acquaintance. What his wife could want with such a name as his I can't conceive."

"Apparently, it was better than the lady's own."

"Effectively! So I have heard of my friend Paddy changing clothes with the scarecrow. I don't know which name is the most distinguished, that of the English bishop or the German baron."

"My lord," cried the other gentleman, rising and laying his hand on a large star on his coat, "you forget that I, too, am a Baron and a Chevalier of the Holy Roman—"

"—Order of the Spur!—not in the least, my dear knight and baron! You will have no more wine? We shall meet at Madame de Bernstein's to-night." The knight and baron quitted the table, felt in his embroidered pockets, as if for money to give the waiter, who brought him his great laced hat, and waving that menial off with a hand surrounded by large ruffles and blazing rings, he stalked away from the room.

It was only when the person addressed as my lord had begun to speak of the bishop's widow and the German baron's wife that Harry Warrington was aware how his aunt and himself had been the subject of the two gentlemen's conversation. Ere the conviction had settled itself on his mind, one of the speakers had quitted the room, and the other turning to a table at which two gentlemen sat, said, "What a little sharper it is! Everything I said about Bernstein relates mutato nomine to him. I knew the fellow to be a spy and a rogue. He has changed his religion I don't know how many times. I had him turned out of the Hague myself when I was ambassador, and I know he was caned in Vienna."

"I wonder my Lord Chesterfield associates with such

a villain!" called out Harry from his table. The other couple of diners looked at him. To his surprise the nobleman so addressed went on talking.

"There cannot be a more *fieffé coquin* than this Poellnitz. Why, heaven be thanked, he has actually left me my snuff-box! You laugh?—the fellow is capable of taking it." And my lord thought it was his own satire at which the young men were laughing.

"You are quite right, sir," said one of the two diners, turning to Mr. Warrington, "though, saving your presence, I don't know what business it is of yours. My lord will play with anybody who will set him. Don't be alarmed, he is as deaf as a post, and did not hear a word that you said; and that's why my lord will play with anybody who will put a pack of cards before him, and that is the reason why he consorts with this rogue.

"Faith, I know other noblemen who are not particular as to their company," says Mr. Jack.

"Do you mean because I associate with you? I know my company, my good friend, and I defy most men to have the better of me."

Not having paid the least attention to Mr. Warrington's angry interruption, my lord opposite was talking in his favourite French with Monsieur Barbeau, the landlord, and graciously complimenting him on his dinner. The host bowed again and again; was enchanted that his Excellency was satisfied: had not forgotten the art which he had learned when he was a young man in his Excellency's kingdom of Ireland. The salmi was to my lord's liking? He had just served a dish to the young American seigneur who sat opposite, the gentleman from Virginia.

"To *whom?*" My lord's pale face became red for a moment, as he asked this question, and looked towards Harry Warrington, opposite to him.

"To the young gentleman from Virginia who has just arrived, and who perfectly possesses our beautiful language!" says Mr. Barbeau, thinking to kill two birds, as it were, with this one stone of a compliment.

"And to whom your lordship will be answerable for language reflecting upon my family, and uttered in the presence of these gentlemen," cried out Mr. Warrington, at the top of his voice, determined that his opponent should hear.

"You must go and call into his ear, and then he may perchance hear you," said one of the younger guests.

"I will take care that his lordship shall understand my meaning, one way or other," Mr. Warrington said, with much dignity: "and will not suffer calumnies regarding my relatives to be uttered by him or any other man!"

Whilst Harry was speaking, the little nobleman opposite to him did not hear him, but had time sufficient to arrange his own reply. He had risen, passing his handkerchief once or twice across his mouth, and laying his slim fingers on the table. "Sir," said he, "you will believe, on the word of a gentleman, that I had no idea before whom I was speaking, and it seems that my acquaintance, Monsieur de Poellnitz, knew you no better than myself. Had I known you, believe me that I should have been the last man in the world to utter a syllable that should give you annoyance; and I tender you my regrets and apologies before my Lord March and Mr. Morris here present."

To these words, Mr. Warrington could only make a bow, and mumble out a few words of acknowledgment: which speech having made believe to hear, my lord made Harry another very profound bow, and saying he should have the honour of waiting upon Mr. Warrington at his lodgings, saluted the company, and went away.

CHAPTER XXVI

IN WHICH WE ARE AT A VERY GREAT DISTANCE FROM OAKHURST

WITHIN the precincts of the "White Horse Tavern," and coming up to the windows of the eating-room, was a bowling-green, with a table or two, where guests might sit and partake of punch or tea. The three gentlemen having come to an end of their dinner about the same time, Mr. Morris proposed that they should adjourn to the Green, and there drink a cool bottle. "Jack Morris would adjourn to the 'Dust Hole,' as a pretext for a fresh drink," said my lord. On which Jack said he supposed each gentleman had his own favourite way of going to the deuce. His weakness, he owned, was a bottle.

"My Lord Chesterfield's deuce is deuce-ace," says my Lord March. "His lordship can't keep away from the cards or dice."

"My Lord March has not one devil, but several devils. He loves gambling, he loves horse-racing, he loves betting, he loves drinking, he loves eating, he loves money,

he loves women; and you have fallen into bad company, Mr. Warrington, when you lighted upon his lordship. He will play you for every acre you have in Virginia."

"With the greatest pleasure in life, Mr. Warrington!" interposes my lord.

"And for all your tobacco, and for all your spices, and for all your slaves, and for all your oxen and asses, and for everything that is yours."

"Shall we begin now, Jack? you are never without a dice-box or a bottle-screw. I will set Mr. Warrington for what he likes."

"Unfortunately, my lord, the tobacco, and the slaves, and the asses, and the oxen, are not mine, as yet. I am just of age, and my mother, scarce twenty years older, has quite as good chance of long life as I have."

"I will bet you that you survive her. I will pay you a sum now against four times the sum to be paid at her death. I will set you a fair sum over this table against the reversion of your estate in Virginia at the old lady's departure. What do you call your place?"

"Castlewood."

"A principality, I hear it is. I will bet that its value has been exaggerated ten times at least amongst the quidnuncs here. How came you by the name of Castlewood? —you are related to my lord? Oh, stay: I know,—my lady, your mother, descends from the real head of the house. He took the losing side in '15. I have had the story a dozen times from my old Duchess. She knew your grandfather. He was friend of Addison and Steele, and Pope and Milton, I dare say, and the bigwigs. It is a pity he did not stay at home, and transport the other branch of the family to the plantations."

"I have just been staying at Castlewood with my cousin there," remarked Mr. Warrington.

"H'm! Did you play with him? He's fond of pasteboard and bones."

"Never but for sixpences and a pool of commerce with the ladies."

"So much the better for both of you. But you played with Will Esmond if he was at home? I will lay ten to one you played with Will Esmond."

Harry blushed, and owned that of an evening his cousin and he had had a few games at cards."

"And Tom Sampson, the chaplain," cried Jack Morris, "was he of the party? I wager that Tom made a third, and the Lord deliver you from Tom and Will Esmond together!"

"Nay. The truth is, I won of both of them," said Mr. Warrington.

"And they paid you? Well, miracles will never cease!"

"I did not say anything about miracles," remarked Mr. Harry, smiling over his wine.

"And you don't tell tales out of school—and so much the better, Mr. Warrington?" says my lord.

"If Mr. Warrington has been to school to Lord Castlewood and Will Esmond, your tutors must have cost you a pretty penny, mustn't they, March?"

"Must they, Morris?" said my lord, as if he only half liked the other's familiarity.

Both of the two gentlemen were dressed alike, in small scratch-wigs without powder, in blue frocks with plate buttons, in buckskins and riding-boots, in little hats with a narrow cord of lace, and no outward mark of fashion.

"I don't care for indoor games much, my lord," says

Harry, warming with his wine; "but I should like to go to Newmarket, and long to see a good English hunting-field."

"We will show you Newmarket and the hunting-field, sir. Can you ride pretty well?"

"I think I can," Harry said; "and I can shoot pretty well, and jump some."

"What's your weight? I bet you we weigh even, or I weigh most. I bet you Jack Morris beats you at birds or a mark, at five-and-twenty paces. I bet you I jump farther than you on flat ground, here on this green."

"I don't know Mr. Morris's shooting—I never saw either gentleman before—but I take your bets, my lord, at what you please," cries Harry, who by this time was more than warm with Burgundy.

"Ponies on each!" cried my lord.

"Done and done!" cried my lord and Harry together. The young man thought it was for the honour of his country not to be ashamed of any bet made to him.

"We can try the last bet now, if your feet are pretty steady," said my lord, springing up, stretching his arms and limbs, and looking at the crisp dry grass. He drew his boots off, then his coat and waistcoat, buckling his belt round his waist, and flinging his clothes down to the ground.

Harry had more respect for his garments. It was his best suit. He took off the velvet coat and waistcoat, folded them up daintily, and, as the two or three tables round were slopped with drink, went to place the clothes on a table in the eating-room, of which the windows were open.

Here a new guest had entered; and this was no other

than Mr. Wolfe, who was soberly eating a chicken and salad, with a modest pint of wine. Harry was in high spirits. He told the Colonel he had a bet with my Lord March—would Colonel Wolfe stand him halves? The Colonel said he was too poor to bet. Would he come out and see fair play? That he would with all his heart. Colonel Wolfe set down his glass, and stalked through the open window after his young friend.

"Who is that tallow-faced Put with the carroty hair?" says Jack Morris, on whom the Burgundy had had its due effect.

Mr. Warrington explained that this was Lieutenant-Colonel Wolfe, of the 20th Regiment.

"Your humble servant, gentlemen!" says the Colonel, making the company a rigid military bow.

"Never saw such a figure in my life!" cries Jack Morris. "Did you—March?"

"I beg your pardon, I think you said March?" said the Colonel, looking very much surprised.

"I am the Earl of March, sir, at Colonel Wolfe's service," said the nobleman, bowing. "My friend, Mr. Morris, is so intimate with me, that, after dinner, we are quite like brothers."

"Why is not all Tunbridge Wells by to hear this?" thought Morris. And he was so delighted that he shouted out, "Two to one on my lord!"

"Done!" calls out Mr. Warrington; and the enthusiastic Jack was obliged to cry "Done!" too.

"Take him, Colonel," Harry whispers to his friend.

But the Colonel said he could not afford to lose, and therefore could not hope to win.

"I see you have won one of our bets already, Mr. Warrington," my Lord March remarked. "I am taller

than you by an inch or two, but you are broader round the shoulders."

"Pooh, my dear Will! I bet you you weigh *twice* as much as he does!" cries Jack Morris.

"Done, Jack!" says my lord, laughing. "The bets are all ponies. Will you take him, Mr. Warrington?"

"No, my dear fellow—one's enough," says Jack.

"Very good, my dear fellow," says my lord; "and now we will settle the other wager."

Having already arrayed himself in his best silk stockings, black satin-net breeches, and neatest pumps, Harry did not care to take off his shoes as his antagonist had done, whose heavy riding-boots and spurs were, to be sure, little calculated for leaping. They had before them a fine even green turf of some thirty yards in length, enough for a run and enough for a jump. A gravel-walk ran around this green, beyond which was a wall and gate-sign—a field azure, bearing the Hanoverian White Horse rampant between two skittles proper, and for motto the name of the landlord and of the animal depicted.

My lord's friend laid a handkerchief on the ground as the mark whence the leapers were to take their jump, and Mr. Wolfe stood at the other end of the grass-plat to note the spot where each came down. "My lord went first," writes Mr. Warrington, in a letter to Mrs. Mountain, at Castlewood, Virginia, still extant. "He was for having me take the lead; but, remembering the story about 'the Battel of Fontanoy' which my dearest George used to tell, I says, 'Monseigneur le Comte, tirez le premier, s'il vous play.' So he took his run in his *stocken-feet*, and for the honour of Old Virginia, I had the *gratafacation* of beating his lordship by more than

two feet—viz., two feet nine inches—me jumping twenty-one feet three inches, by the drawer's measured tape, and his lordship only eighteen six. I had won from him about my weight before (which I knew the moment I set my eye upon him). So he and *Mr. Jack* paid me these two *betts*. And with my best duty to my mother—she will not be displeased with me, for I bett for *the honour of the Old Dominion,* and my opponent was a nobleman of the first quality, himself holding *two Erldomes,* and heir to a Duke. Betting is all the *rage* here, and the bloods and young fellows of fashion are betting away from morning till night.

"I told them—and that was my mischief perhaps—that there was a gentleman at home who could beat me by *a good foot;* and when they asked who it was, and I said Col. G. Washington, of Mount Vernon—as you know he can, and he's the only man in his county or mine that can do it—Mr. Wolfe asked me ever so many questions about Col. G. W., and showed that he had heard of him, and talked over last year's *unhappy campane* as if he knew every inch of the ground, and he knew the names of all our rivers, only he called the Potowmac Pottamac, at which we *had a good laugh at him.* My Lord of March and Ruglen was not in the least *ill-humour* about losing, and he and his friend handed me notes out of their pocket-books, which filled mine that was *getting very empty,* for the *vales* to the servants at my Cousin Castlewood's house and buying a horse at Oakhurst have very nearly put me on the necessity of making another draft upon my honoured mother or her London or Bristol agent."

These feats of activity over, the four gentlemen now strolled out of the tavern garden into the public walk,

where, by this time, a great deal of company was assembled: upon whom Mr. Jack, who was of a frank and free nature, with a loud voice, chose to make remarks that were not always agreeable. And here, if my Lord March made a joke, of which his lordship was not sparing, Jack roared, "Oh, ho, ho! Oh, good Gad! Oh, my dear earl! Oh, my dear lord, you'll be the death of me!" "It seemed as if he wished everybody to know," writes Harry sagaciously to Mrs. Mountain, "that his friend and companion was *an Erl!*"

There was, indeed, a great variety of characters who passed. M. Poellnitz, no finer dressed than he had been at dinner, grinned, and saluted with his great laced hat and tarnished feathers. Then came by my Lord Chesterfield, in a pearl-coloured suit, with his blue-ribbon and star, and saluted the young men in his turn.

"I will back the old boy for taking his hat off against the whole kingdom, and France, either," says my Lord March. "He has never changed the shape of that hat of his for twenty years. Look at it. There it goes again! Do you see that great big awkward pock-marked, snuff-coloured man, who hardly touches his clumsy beaver in reply. D— his confounded impudence —do you know who that is?"

"No, curse him! Who is it, March?" asks Jack, with an oath.

"It's one Johnson, a Dictionary-maker, about whom my Lord Chesterfield wrote some most capital papers, when his dictionary was coming out, to patronize the fellow. I know they were capital. I've heard Horry Walpole say so, and he knows all about that kind of thing. Confound the impudent schoolmaster!"

"Hang him, he ought to stand in the pillory!" roars Jack.

"That fat man he's walking with is another of your writing fellows,—a printer,—his name is Richardson; he wrote 'Clarissa,' you know."

"Great heavens! my lord, is that the great Richardson? Is that the man who wrote 'Clarissa?'" called out Colonel Wolfe and Mr. Warrington, in a breath.

Harry ran forward to look at the old gentleman toddling along the walk with a train of admiring ladies surrounding him.

"Indeed, my very dear sir," one was saying, "you are too great and good to live in such a world; but sure you were sent to teach it virtue!"

"Ah, my Miss Mulso! Who shall teach the teacher?" said the good, fat old man, raising a kind round face skywards. "Even he has his faults and errors! Even his age and experience does not prevent him from stumbl— Heaven bless my soul, Mr. Johnson! I ask your pardon if I have trodden on your corn."

"You have done both, sir. You have trodden on the corn, and received the pardon," said Mr. Johnson, and went on mumbling some verses, swaying to and fro, his eyes turned towards the ground, his hands behind him, and occasionally endangering with his great stick the honest, meek eyes of his companion author.

"They do not see very well, my dear Mulso," he says to the young lady, "but such as they are, I would keep my *lash* from Mr. Johnson's cudgel. Your servant, sir." Here he made a low bow, and took off his hat to Mr. Warrington, who shrank back with many blushes, after saluting the great author. The great author was accustomed to be adored. A gentler wind never puffed mortal

The "Dictionary Maker"

vanity. Enraptured spinsters flung tea-leaves round him, and incensed him with the coffee-pot. Matrons kissed the slippers they had worked for him. There was a halo of virtue round his nightcap. All Europe had thrilled, panted, admired, trembled, wept, over the pages of the immortal little kind honest man with the round paunch. Harry came back quite glowing and proud at having a bow from him. "Ah!" says he, "my lord, I am glad to have seen him!"

"Seen him! why, dammy, you may see him any day in his shop, I suppose?" says Jack, with a laugh.

"My brother declared that he, and Mr. Fielding, I think, was the name, were the greatest geniuses in England; and often used to say, that when we came to Europe, his first pilgrimage would be to Mr. Richardson," cried Harry, always impetuous, honest, and tender, when he spoke of the dearest friend.

"Your brother spoke like a man," cried Mr. Wolfe, his pale face likewise flushing up. "I would rather be a man of genius, than a peer of the realm."

"Every man to his taste, Colonel," says my lord, much amused. "Your enthusiasm—I don't mean anything personal—refreshes me, on my honour it does."

"So it does me—by gad—perfectly refreshes me," cries Jack.

"So it does Jack—you see—it actually refreshes Jack! I say, Jack, which would you rather be?—a fat old printer, who has written a story about a confounded girl and a fellow that ruins her,—or a Peer of Parliament with ten thousand a year?"

"March—my Lord March, do you take me for a fool?" says Jack, with a tearful voice. "Have I done anything to deserve this language from you?"

"I would rather win honour than honours: I would rather have genius than wealth. I would rather make my name than inherit it, though my father's, thank God, is an honest one," said the young Colonel. "But pardon me, gentlemen!" And here making them a hasty salutation, he ran across the parade towards a young and elderly lady, and a gentleman, who were now advancing.

"It is the beautiful Miss Lowther. I remember now," says my lord. "See! he takes her arm! The report is, he is engaged to her."

"You don't mean to say such a fellow is engaged to any of the Lowthers of the North?" cries out Jack. "Curse me, what is the world come to, with your printers, and your half-pay ensigns, and your schoolmasters, and your infernal nonsense?"

The Dictionary-maker, who had shown so little desire to bow to my Lord Chesterfield, when that famous nobleman courteously saluted him, was here seen to take off his beaver, and bow almost to the ground, before a florid personage in a large round hat, with bands and a gown, who made his appearance in the Walk. This was my Lord Bishop of Salisbury, wearing complacently the blue riband and badge of the Garter, of which Noble Order his lordship was prelate.

Mr. Johnson stood, hat in hand, during the whole time of his conversation with Dr. Gilbert; who made many flattering and benedictory remarks to Mr. Richardson, declaring that he was the supporter of virtue, the preacher of sound morals, the mainstay of religion, of all which points the honest printer himself was perfectly convinced.

Do not let any young lady trip to her grandpapa's bookcase in consequence of this eulogium, and rashly

take down "Clarissa" from the shelf. She would not care to read the volumes, over which her pretty ancestresses wept and thrilled a hundred years ago; which were commended by divines from pulpits and belauded all Europe over. I wonder, are our women more virtuous than their grandmothers, or only more squeamish? If the former, then Miss Smith of New York is certainly more modest than Miss Smith of London, who still does not scruple to say that tables, pianos, and animals have legs. Oh, my faithful, good old Samuel Richardson! Hath the news yet reached thee in Hades that thy sublime novels are huddled away in corners, and that our daughters may no more read "Clarissa" than "Tom Jones?" Go up, Samuel, and be reconciled with thy brother scribe, whom in life thou didst hate so. I wonder whether a century hence the novels of to-day will be hidden behind locks and wires, and make pretty little maidens blush?

"Who is yonder queer person in the high head-dress of my grandmother's time, who stops and speaks to Mr. Richardson?" asked Harry, as a fantastically dressed lady came up, and performed a curtsey and a compliment to the bowing printer.

Jack Morris nervously struck Harry a blow in the side with the butt end of his whip. Lord March laughed.

"Yonder queer person is my gracious kinswoman, Katharine, Duchess of Dover and Queensberry, at your service, Mr. Warrington. She was a beauty once! She is changed now, isn't she? What an old Gorgon it is! She is a great patroness of your book-men: and when that old frump was young, they actually made verses about her."

The Earl quitted his friends for a moment to make

his bow to the old Duchess, Jack Morris explaining to Mr. Warrington how, at the Duke's death, my Lord of March and Ruglen would succeed to his cousin's dukedoms.

"I suppose," says Harry, simply, "his lordship is here in attendance upon the old lady?"

Jack burst into a loud laugh.

"Oh, yes! very much—exactly!" says he. "Why, my dear fellow, you don't mean to say you haven't heard about the little Opera-dancer?"

"I am but lately arrived in England, Mr. Morris," said Harry, with a smile, "and in Virginia, I own, we have not heard much about the little Opera-dancer."

Luckily for us, the secret about the little Opera-dancer never was revealed, for the young men's conversation was interrupted by a lady in a cardinal cape—and a hat by no means unlike those lovely headpieces which have returned into vogue a hundred years after the date of our present history—who made a profound curtsey to the two gentlemen and received their salutation in return. She stopped opposite to Harry; she held out her hand, rather to his wonderment:

"Have you so soon forgotten me, Mr. Warrington?" she said.

Off went Harry's hat in an instant. He started, blushed, stammered, and called out "Good heavens!" as if there had been any celestial wonder in the circumstance! It was Lady Maria come out for a walk. He had not been thinking about her. She was, to say truth, for the moment so utterly out of the young gentleman's mind, that her sudden re-entry there and appearance in the body startled Mr. Warrington's faculties, and caused those guilty blushes to crowd into his cheeks.

No. He was not even thinking of her! A week ago —a year, a hundred years ago it seemed—he would not have been surprised to meet her anywhere. Appearing from amidst darkling shrubberies, gliding over green garden terraces, loitering on stairs, or corridors, hovering even in his dreams, all day or all night, bodily or spiritually, he had been accustomed to meet her. A week ago his heart used to beat. A week ago, and at the very instant when he jumped out of his sleep there was her idea smiling on him. And it was only last Tuesday that his love was stabbed and slain, and he not only had left off mourning for her, but had forgotten her!

"You will come and walk with me a little?" she said. "Or would you like the music best? I dare say you will like the music best."

"You know," said Harry, "I don't care about any music much except"—he was thinking of the Evening Hymn—"except of your playing." He turned very red again as he spoke, he felt he was perjuring himself horribly.

The poor lady was agitated herself by the flutter and agitation which she saw in her young companion. Gracious heaven! Could that tremor and excitement mean that she was mistaken, and that the lad was still faithful? "Give me your arm, and let us take a little walk," she said, waving round a curtsey to the other two gentlemen: "my aunt is asleep after her dinner." Harry could not but offer the arm, and press the hand that lay against his heart. Maria made another fine curtsey to Harry's bowing companions, and walked off with her prize. In her griefs, in her rages, in the pains and anguish of wrong and desertion, how a woman remembers to smile, curtsey, caress, dissemble! How resolutely

they discharge the social proprieties; how they have a word, or a hand, or a kind little speech or reply for the passing acquaintance who crosses unknowing the path of the tragedy, drops a light airy remark or two, (happy self-satisfied rogue!) and passes on. He passes on, and thinks: "That woman was rather pleased with what I said. That joke I made was rather neat. I do really think Lady Maria looks rather favourably at me, and she's a dev'lish fine woman, begad she is!" O you wiseacre! Such was Jack Morris's observation and case as he walked away leaning on the arm of his noble friend, and thinking the whole Society of the Wells was looking at him. He had made some exquisite remarks about a particular run of cards at Lady Flushington's the night before, and Lady Maria had replied graciously and neatly, and so away went Jack perfectly happy.

The absurd creature! I declare we know nothing of anybody (but *that* for my part I know better and better every day). You enter smiling to see your new acquaintance, Mrs. A. and her charming family. You make your bow in the elegant drawing-room of Mr. and Mrs. B. I tell you that in your course through life you are for ever putting your great clumsy foot upon the mute invisible wounds of bleeding tragedies. Mrs. B.'s closets for what you know are stuffed with skeletons. Look there under the sofa-cushion. Is that merely Missy's doll, or is it the limb of a stifled Cupid peeping out? What do you suppose are those ashes smouldering in the grate?—Very likely a suttee has been offered up there just before you came in: a faithful heart has been burned out upon a callous corpse, and you are looking on the *cineri doloso*. You see B. and his wife receiving their company before dinner. Gracious powers! Do

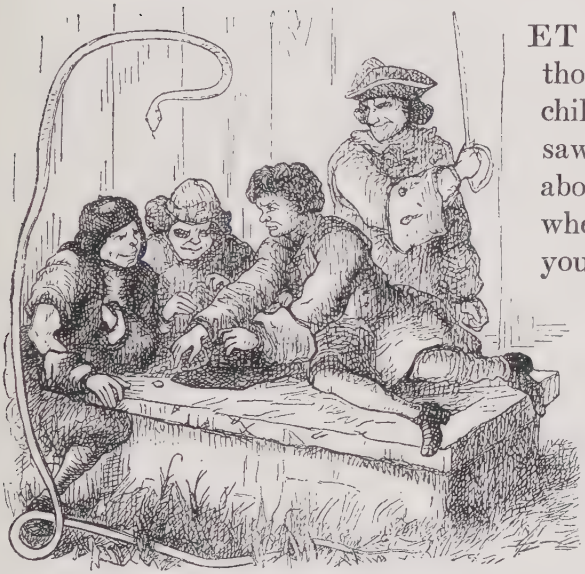
you know that that bouquet which she wears is a signal to Captain C., and that he will find a note under the little bronze Shakspeare on the mantelpiece in the study? And with all this you go up and say some uncommonly neat thing (as you fancy) to Mrs. B. about the weather (clever dog!), or about Lady E.'s last party (fashionable buck!), or about the dear children in the nursery (insinuating rogue!). Heaven and earth, my good Sir, how can you tell that B. is not going to pitch all the children out of the nursery window this very night, or that his lady has not made an arrangement for leaving them, and running off with the Captain? How do you know that those footmen are not disguised bailiffs?—that yonder large-looking butler (really a skeleton) is not the pawnbroker's man? and that there are not skeleton rôtis and entrées under every one of the covers? Look at their feet peeping from under the table-cloth. Mind how you stretch out your own lovely little slippers, Madam, lest you knock over a rib or two. Remark the Death's-head moths fluttering among the flowers. See the pale winding-sheets gleaming in the wax-candles! I know it is an old story, and especially that this preacher has yelled vanitas vanitatum five hundred times before. I can't help always falling upon it, and cry out with particular loudness and wailing, and become especially melancholy, when I see a dead love tied to a live love. Ha! I look up from my desk, across the street: and there come in Mr. and Mrs. D. from their walk in Kensington Gardens. How she hangs on him! how jolly and happy he looks, as the children frisk round! My poor dear benighted Mrs. D., there is a Regent's Park as well as a Kensington Gardens in the world. Go in, fond wretch! Smilingly lay before him what you know he likes for

dinner. Show him the children's copies and the reports of their masters. Go with Missy to the piano, and play your artless duet together; and fancy you are happy!

There go Harry and Maria taking their evening walk on the common, away from the village which is waking up from its after-dinner siesta, and where the people are beginning to stir and the music to play. With the music Maria knows Madame de Bernstein will waken: with the candles she must be back to the tea-table and the cards. Never mind. Here is a minute. It may be my love is dead, but here is a minute to kneel over the grave and pray by it. He certainly was not thinking about her: he was startled and did not even know her. He was laughing and talking with Jack Morris and my Lord March. He is twenty years younger than she. Never mind. To-day is to-day in which we are all equal. This moment is ours. Come, let us walk a little way over the heath, Harry. She will go, though she feels a deadly assurance that he will tell her all is over between them, and that he loves the dark-haired girl at Oakhurst.

CHAPTER XXVII

PLENUM OPUS ALEÆ



"LET me hear about those children, child, whom I saw running about at the house where they took you in, poor dear boy, after your dreadful fall?" says Maria, as they paced the common. "Oh, that fall, Harry! I thought I should have died when I saw it! You needn't squeeze one's arm so. You know you don't care for me?"

"The people are the very best, kindest, dearest people I have ever met in the world," cries Mr. Warrington. "Mrs. Lambert was a friend of my mother when she was in Europe for her education. Colonel Lambert is a most accomplished gentleman, and has seen service everywhere. He was in Scotland with his Royal Highness, in Flanders, at Minorca. No natural parents could be kinder than they were to me. How can I show my grati-

tude to them? I want to make them a present: I *must* make them a present," says Harry, clapping his hand into his pocket, which was filled with the crisp spoils of Morris and March.

"We can go to the toy-shop, my dear, and buy a couple of dolls for the children," says Lady Maria. "You would offend the parents by offering anything like payment for their kindness."

"Dolls for Hester and Theo! Why, do you think a woman is not woman till she is forty, Maria?" (The arm under Harry's here gave a wince perhaps,—ever so slight a wince.) "I can tell you Miss Hester by no means considers herself a child, and Miss Theo is older than her sister. They know ever so many languages. They have read books—oh! piles and piles of books! They play on the harpsichord and sing together admirable; and Theo composes, and sings songs of her own."

"Indeed! I scarcely saw them. I thought they were children. They looked quite childish. I had no idea they had all these perfections, and were such wonders of the world."

"That's just the way with you women! At home, if me or George praised a woman, Mrs. Esmond and Mountain, too, would be sure to find fault with her!" cries Harry.

"I am sure I would find fault with no one who is kind to *you,* Mr. Warrington," sighed Maria, "though you are not angry with me for envying them because they had to take care of you when you were wounded and ill—whilst I—I had to leave you?"

"You dear, good Maria!"

"No, Harry! I am *not* dear and good. There, sir, you needn't be so pressing in your attentions. Look!

There is your black man walking with a score of other wretches in livery. The horrid creatures are going to fuddle at the tea-garden, and get tipsy like their masters. That dreadful Mr. Morris was perfectly tipsy when I came to you, and frightened you so."

"I had just won great bets from both of them. What shall I buy for you, my dear cousin?" And Harry narrated the triumphs which he had just achieved. He was in high spirits: he laughed, he bragged a little. "For the honour of Virginia I was determined to show them what jumping was," he said. "With a little practice I think I could leap two foot further."

Maria was pleased with the victories of her young champion. "But you must beware about play, child," she said. "You know it hath been the ruin of our family. My brother Castlewood, Will, our poor father, our aunt, Lady Castlewood herself, they have all been victims to it: as for my Lord March, he is the most dreadful gambler and the most successful of all the nobility."

"I don't intend to be afraid of him, nor of his friend Mr. Jack Morris neither," says Harry, again fingering the delightful notes. "What do you play at Aunt Bernstein's? Cribbage, all-fours, brag, whist, commerce, picquet, quadrille? I'm ready at any of 'em. What o'clock is that striking—sure 'tis seven!"

"And you want to begin now," said the plaintive Maria. "You don't care about walking with your poor cousin. Not long ago you did."

"Hey! Youth is youth, cousin!" cried Mr. Harry, tossing up his head, "and a young fellow must have his fling!" and he strutted by his partner's side, confident,

happy, and eager for pleasure. Not long ago he did like to walk with her. Only yesterday he liked to be with Theo and Hester, and good Mrs. Lambert; but pleasure, life, gaiety, the desire to shine and to conquer, had also their temptations for the lad, who seized the cup like other lads, and did not care to calculate on the headache in store for the morning. Whilst he and his cousin were talking, the fiddles from the open orchestra on the Parade made a great tuning and squeaking, preparatory to their usual evening concert. Maria knew her aunt was awake again, and that she must go back to her slavery. Harry never asked about that slavery, though he must have known it, had he taken the trouble to think. He never pitied his cousin. He was not thinking about her at all. Yet when his mishap befell him, she had been wounded far more cruelly than he was. He had scarce ever been out of her thoughts, which of course she had had to bury under smiling hypocrisies, as is the way with her sex. I know, my dear Mrs. Grundy, you think she was an old fool? Ah! do you suppose fools' caps do not cover grey hair, as well as jet or auburn? Bear gently with our elderly *fredaines,* O you Minerva of a woman! Or perhaps you are so good and wise that you don't read novels at all? This I know, that there are late crops of wild oats, as well as early harvests of them; and (from observation of self and neighbour) I have an idea that the *avena fatua* grows up to the very last days of the year.

Like worldly parents anxious to get rid of a troublesome child, and go out to their evening party, Madame Bernstein and her attendants had put the sun to bed, whilst it was as yet light, and had drawn the curtains over it, and were busy about their cards and their can-

dles, and their tea and negus, and other refreshments. One chair after another landed ladies at the Baroness's door, more or less painted, patched, brocaded. To these came gentlemen in gala raiment. Mr. Poellnitz's star was the largest, and his coat the most embroidered of all present. My Lord of March and Ruglen, when he made his appearance, was quite changed from the individual with whom Harry had made acquaintance at the "White Horse." His tight brown scratch was exchanged for a neatly curled feather top, with a bag and grey powder, his jockey-dress and leather breeches replaced by a rich and elegant French suit. Mr. Jack Morris had just such another wig and a suit of stuff as closely as possible resembling his lordship's. Mr. Wolfe came in attendance upon his beautiful mistress, Miss Lowther, and her aunt who loved cards, as all the world did. When my Lady Maria Esmond made her appearance, 'tis certain that her looks belied Madame Bernstein's account of her. Her shape was very fine, and her dress showed a great deal of it. Her complexion was by nature exceeding fair, and a dark frilled ribbon, clasped by a jewel, round her neck, enhanced its snowy whiteness. Her cheeks were not redder than those of other ladies present, and the roses were pretty openly purchased by everybody at the perfumery-shops. An artful patch or two, it was supposed, added to the lustre of her charms. Her hoop was not larger than the iron contrivances which ladies of the present day hang round their persons; and we may pronounce that the costume, if absurd in some points, was pleasing altogether. Suppose our ladies took to wearing of bangles and nose-rings? I dare say we should laugh at the ornaments, and not dislike them, and lovers would make no

difficulty about lifting up the ring to be able to approach the rosy lips underneath.

As for the Baroness de Bernstein, when that lady took the pains of making a grand toilette, she appeared as an object, handsome still, and magnificent, but melancholy, and even somewhat terrifying to behold. You read the past in some old faces, while some others lapse into mere meekness and content. The fires go quite out of some eyes, as the crow's-feet pucker round them; they flash no longer with scorn, or with anger, or love: they gaze, and no one is melted by their sapphire glances; they look, and no one is dazzled. My fair young reader, if you are not so perfect a beauty as the peerless Lindamira, Queen of the Ball; if at the end of it, as you retire to bed, you meekly own that you have had but two or three partners, whilst Lindamira has had a crowd round her all night—console yourself with thinking that, at fifty, you will look as kind and pleasant as you appear now at eighteen. You will not have to lay down your coach and six of beauty and see another step into it, and walk yourself through the rest of life. You will have to forego no long-accustomed homage; you will not witness and own the depreciation of your smiles. You will not see fashion forsake your quarter; and remain all dust, gloom, and cobwebs within your once splendid saloons, with placards in your sad windows, gaunt, lonely, and to let! You may not have known any grandeur, but you won't feel any desertion. You will not have enjoyed millions, but you will have escaped bankruptcy. "Our hostess," said my Lord Chesterfield to his friend in a confidential whisper, of which the utterer did not in the least know the loudness, "puts me in mind of Covent Garden in my youth. Then

it was the court end of the town, and inhabited by the highest fashion. Now, a nobleman's house is a gaming-house, or you may go in with a friend and call for a bottle."

"Hey! a bottle and a tavern are good things in their way," says my Lord March, with a shrug of his shoulders. "I was not born before the Georges came in, though I intend to live to a hundred. I never knew the Bernstein but as an old woman; and if she ever had beauty, hang me if I know how she spent it."

"No, hang me, how did she spend it?" laughs out Jack Morris.

"Here's a table! Shall we sit down and have a game?—Don't let the German come in. He won't pay. Mr. Warrington, will you take a card?" Mr. Warrington and my Lord Chesterfield found themselves partners against Mr. Morris and the Earl of March. "You have come too late, Baron," says the elder nobleman to the other nobleman who was advancing. "We have made our game. What, have you forgotten Mr. Warrington of Virginia—the young gentleman whom you met in London?"

"The young gentleman whom I met at Arthur's Chocolate House had black hair, a little cocked nose, and was by no means so fortunate in his personal appearance as Mr. Warrington," said the Baron with much presence of mind. "Warrington, Dorrington, Harrington? We of the continent cannot retain your insular names. I certify that this gentleman is not the individual of whom I spoke at dinner." And, glancing kindly upon him, the old beau sidled away to a farther end of the room, where Mr. Wolfe and Miss Lowther were engaged in deep conversation in the em-

brasure of a window. Here the Baron thought fit to engage the Lieutenant-Colonel upon the Prussian manual exercise, which had lately been introduced into King George II.'s army—a subject with which Mr. Wolfe was thoroughly familiar, and which no doubt would have interested him at any other moment but that. Nevertheless the old gentleman uttered his criticisms and opinions, and thought he perfectly charmed the two persons to whom he communicated them.

At the commencement of the evening the Baroness received her guests personally, and as they arrived engaged them in talk and introductory courtesies. But as the rooms and tables filled, and the parties were made up, Madame de Bernstein became more and more restless, and finally retreated with three friends to her own corner, where a table specially reserved for her was occupied by her major-domo. And here the old lady sat down resolutely, never changing her place or quitting her game till cock-crow. The charge of receiving the company devolved now upon my Lady Maria, who did not care for cards, but dutifully did the honours of the house to her aunt's guests, and often rustled by the table where her young cousin was engaged with his three friends.

"Come and cut the cards for us," said my Lord March to her ladyship, as she passed on one of her wistful visits. "Cut the cards, and bring us luck, Lady Maria! We have had none to-night, and Mr. Warrington is winning everything."

"I hope you are not playing high, Harry," said the lady, timidly.

"Oh, no, only sixpences," cried my lord, dealing.

"Only sixpences," echoed Mr. Morris, who was Lord March's partner. But Mr. Morris must have been very

keenly alive to the value of sixpence, if the loss of a few such coins could make his round face look so dismal. My Lord Chesterfield sat opposite Mr. Warrington, sorting his cards. No one could say, by inspecting that calm physiognomy, whether good or ill fortune was attending his lordship.

Some word not altogether indicative of delight, slipped out of Mr. Morris's lips, on which his partner cried out, "Hang it, Morris, play your cards, and hold your tongue!" Considering they were only playing for sixpences, his lordship, too, was strangely affected.

Maria, still fondly lingering by Harry's chair, with her hand at the back of it, could see his cards, and that a whole covey of trumps was ranged in one corner. She had not taken away his luck. She was pleased to think she had cut that pack which had dealt him all those pretty trumps. As Lord March was dealing, he had said in a quiet voice to Mr. Warrington, "The bet as before, Mr. Warrington, or shall we double it?"

"Anything you like, my lord," said Mr. Warrington, very quietly.

"We will say, then—shillings."

"Yes, shillings," says Mr. Warrington, and the game proceeded.

The end of the day's, and some succeeding days' sport may be gathered from the following letter, which was never delivered to the person to whom it was addressed, but found its way to America in the papers of Mr. Henry Warrington:—

"*Tunbridge Wells, August* 10, 1756.

"Dear George,—As White's two bottles of Burgundy and a pack of cards constitute all the joys of your life, I take for granted that you are in London at this moment, preferring

smoke and faro to fresh air and fresh haystacks. This will be delivered to you by a young gentleman with whom I have lately made acquaintance, and whom you will be charmed to know. He will play with you at any game for any stake, up to any hour of the night, and drink any reasonable number of bottles during the play. Mr. Warrington is no other than the Fortunate Youth about whom so many stories have been told in the *Public Advertiser* and other prints. He has an estate in Virginia as big as Yorkshire, with the incumbrance of a mother, the reigning Sovereign; but, as the country is unwholesome, and fevers plentiful, let us hope that Mrs. Esmond will die soon, and leave this virtuous lad in undisturbed possession. She is aunt of that *polisson* of a Castlewood, who never pays his play-debts, unless he is more honourable in his dealings with you than he has been with me. Mr. W. is de bonne race. We must have him of our society, if it be only that I may win my money back from him.

"He has had the devil's luck here, and has been winning everything, whilst his old card-playing beldam of an aunt has been losing. A few nights ago, when I first had the ill luck to make his acquaintance, he beat me in jumping (having practised the art amongst the savages, and running away from bears in his native woods); he won bets of me and Jack Morris about my weight; and at night, when we sat down to play, at old Bernstein's, he won from us all round. If you can settle our last Epsom account, please hand over to Mr. Warrington 350*l.*, which I still owe him, after pretty well emptying my pocket-book. Chesterfield has dropped six hundred to him, too; but his lordship does not wish to have it known, having sworn to give up play, and live cleanly. Jack Morris, who has not been hit as hard as either of us, and can afford it quite as well, for the fat chuff has no houses nor *train* to keep up, and all his misbegotten father's money in hand, roars like a bull of Bashan about his losses. We had a second night's play, *en petit comité*, and Barbeau served us a fair dinner in a private room.

Mr. Warrington holds his tongue like a gentleman, and none of us have talked about our losses; but the whole place does, for us. Yesterday the Cattarina looked as sulky as thunder, because I would not give her a diamond necklace, and says I refuse her, because I have lost five thousand to the Virginian. My old Duchess of Q. has the very same story, besides knowing to a fraction what Chesterfield and Jack have lost.

"Warrington treated the company to breakfast and music at the rooms; and you should have seen how the women tore him to pieces. That fiend of a Cattarina ogled him out of my vis-à-vis, and under my very nose, yesterday, as we were driving to Penshurst, and I have no doubt has sent him a *billet-doux* ere this. He shot Jack Morris all to pieces at a mark: we shall try him with partridges when the season comes.

"He is a fortunate fellow, certainly. He has youth (which is not deboshed by evil courses in Virginia, as ours is in England); he has good health, good looks, and good luck.

"In a word, Mr. Warrington has won our money in a very gentlemanlike manner; and, as I like him, and wish to win some of it back again, I put him under your worship's saintly guardianship. Adieu! I am going to the North, and shall be back for Doncaster.

"Yours ever, dear George,
"M. & R."

"To George Augustus Selwyn, Esq., at White's Chocolate House,
St. James's Street."

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

OUR young Virginian found himself, after two or three days at Tunbridge Wells, by far the most important personage in that merry little watering-place. No nobleman in the place inspired so much curiosity. My Lord Bishop of Salisbury himself was scarce treated with more respect. People turned round to look after Harry as he passed, and country-folks stared at him as they came into market. At the rooms, matrons encouraged him to come round to them, and found means to leave him alone with their daughters, most of whom smiled upon him. Everybody knew, to an acre and a shilling, the extent of his Virginian property, and the amount of his income. At every tea-table in the Wells, his winnings at play were told and calculated. Wonderful is the knowledge which our neighbours have of our affairs! So great was the interest and curiosity which Harry inspired, that people even smiled upon his servant, and took Gumbo aside and

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treated him with ale and cold meat, in order to get news of the young Virginian. Mr. Gumbo fattened under the diet, became a leading member of the Society of Valets in the place, and lied more enormously than ever. No party was complete unless Mr. Warrington attended it. The lad was not a little amused and astonished by this prosperity, and bore his new honours pretty well. He had been bred at home to think too well of himself, and his present good fortune no doubt tended to confirm his self-satisfaction. But he was not too much elated. He did not brag about his victories or give himself any particular airs. In engaging in play with the gentlemen who challenged him, he had acted up to his queer code of honour. He felt as if he was bound to meet them when they summoned him, and that if they invited him to a horse-race, or a drinking-bout, or a match at cards, for the sake of Old Virginia he must not draw back. Mr. Harry found his new acquaintances ready to try him at all these sports and contests. He had a strong head, a skilful hand, a firm seat, and unflinching nerve. The representative of Old Virginia came off very well in his friendly rivalry with the mother country.

Madame de Bernstein, who got her fill of cards every night, and, no doubt, repaired the ill fortune of which we heard in the last chapter, was delighted with her nephew's victories and reputation. He had shot with Jack Morris and beat him: he had ridden a match with Mr. Scamper and won it. He played tennis with Captain Batts, and, though the boy had never tried the game before, in a few days he held his own uncommonly well. He had engaged in play with those celebrated gamesters, my Lords of Chesterfield and March; and

they both bore testimony to his coolness, gallantry, and good breeding. At his books Harry was not brilliant certainly: but he could write as well as a great number of men of fashion; and the *naïveté* of his ignorance amused the old lady. She had read books in her time, and could talk very well about them with bookish people: she had a relish for humour and delighted in Molière and Mr. Fielding, but she loved the world far better than the library, and was never so interested in any novel but that she would leave it for a game of cards. She superintended with fond pleasure the improvements of Harry's toilette: rummaged out fine laces for his ruffles and shirt, and found a pretty diamond-brooch for his frill. He attained the post of prime favourite of all her nephews and kinsfolk. I fear Lady Maria was only too well pleased at the lad's successes, and did not grudge him his superiority over her brothers; but those gentlemen must have quaked with fear and envy when they heard of Mr. Warrington's prodigious successes, and the advance which he had made in their wealthy aunt's favour.

After a fortnight of Tunbridge, Mr. Harry had become quite a personage. He knew all the good company in the place. Was it his fault if he became acquainted with the bad likewise? Was he very wrong in taking the world as he found it, and drinking from that sweet sparkling pleasure-cup, which was filled for him to the brim? The old aunt enjoyed his triumphs, and for her part only bade him pursue his enjoyments. She was not a rigorous old moralist, nor, perhaps, a very wholesome preceptress for youth. If the Cattarina wrote him billets-doux, I fear Aunt Bernstein would have bade him accept the invitations: but the lad had

brought with him from his colonial home a stock of modesty which he still wore along with the honest homespun linen. Libertinism was rare in those thinly-peopled regions from which he came. The vices of great cities were scarce known or practised in the rough of the American Continent. Harry Warrington blushed like a girl at the daring talk of his new European associates: even Aunt Bernstein's conversation and jokes astounded the young Virginian, so that the worldly old woman would call him Joseph, or simpleton.

But, however innocent he was, the world gave him credit for being as bad as other folks. How was he to know that he was not to associate with that saucy Cattarina? He had seen my Lord March driving her about in his lordship's phaeton. Harry thought there was no harm in giving her his arm, and parading openly with her in the public walks. She took a fancy to a trinket at the toy-shop; and, as his pockets were full of money, he was delighted to make her a present of the locket, which she coveted. The next day it was a piece of lace: again Harry gratified her. The next day it was something else: there was no end to Madam Cattarina's fancies: but here the young gentleman stopped, turning off her request with a joke and a laugh. He was shrewd enough, and not reckless or prodigal, though generous. He had no idea of purchasing diamond drops for the petulant little lady's pretty ears.

But who was to give him credit for his modesty? Old Bernstein insisted upon believing that her nephew was playing Don Juan's part, and supplanting my Lord March. She insisted the more when poor Maria was by; loving to stab the tender heart of that spinster,

and enjoying her niece's piteous silence and discomfiture.

"Why, my dear," says the Baroness, "boys will be boys, and I don't want Harry to be the first milksop in his family!" The bread which Maria ate at her aunt's expense choked her sometimes. Oh me, how hard and indigestible some women know how to make it!

Mr. Wolfe was for ever coming over from Westerham to pay court to the lady of his love; and, knowing that the Colonel was entirely engaged in that pursuit, Mr. Warrington scarcely expected to see much of him, however much he liked that officer's conversation and society. It was different from the talk of the ribald people round about Harry. Mr. Wolfe never spoke of cards, or horses' pedigrees; or bragged of his performances in the hunting-field, or boasted of the favours of women; or retailed any of the innumerable scandals of the time. It was not a good time. That old world was more dissolute than ours. There was an old king with mistresses openly in his train, to whom the great folks of the land did honour. There was a nobility, many of whom were mad and reckless in the pursuit of pleasure; there was a looseness of words and acts which we must note, as faithful historians, without going into particulars, and needlessly shocking present readers. Our young gentleman had lighted upon some of the wildest of these wild people, and had found an old relative who lived in the very midst of the rout.

Harry then did not remark how Colonel Wolfe avoided him, or when they casually met, at first notice the Colonel's cold and altered demeanour. He did not know the stories that were told of him. Who does know the stories that are told of him? Who makes them?

Who are the fathers of those wondrous lies? Poor Harry did not know the reputation he was getting; and that, whilst he was riding his horse and playing his game and taking his frolic, he was passing amongst many respectable persons for being the most abandoned and profligate and godless of young men.

Alas, and alas! to think that the lad whom we liked so, and who was so gentle and quiet when with us, so simple and so easily pleased, should be a hardened profligate, a spendthrift, a confirmed gamester, a frequenter of abandoned women! These stories came to worthy Colonel Lambert at Oakhurst: first one bad story, then another, then crowds of them, till the good man's kind heart was quite filled with grief and care, so that his family saw that something annoyed him. At first he would not speak on the matter at all, and put aside the wife's fond queries. Mrs. Lambert thought a great misfortune had happened; that her husband had been ruined; that he had been ordered on a dangerous service; that one of the boys was ill, disgraced, dead; who can resist an anxious woman, or escape the cross-examination of the conjugal pillow? Lambert was obliged to tell a part of what he knew about Harry Warrington. The wife was as much grieved and amazed as her husband had been. From papa's and mamma's bedroom the grief, after being stifled for a while under the bed-pillows there, came down stairs. Theo and Hester took the complaint after their parents, and had it very bad. O kind little wounded hearts! At first Hester turned red, flew into a great passion, clenched her little fists, and vowed she would not believe a word of the wicked stories; but she ended by believing them. Scandal almost always does master people: especially good

and innocent people. Oh, the serpent they had nursed by their fire! Oh, the wretched, wretched boy! To think of his walking about with that horrible painted Frenchwoman, and giving her diamond necklaces, and parading his shame before all the society at the Wells! The three ladies having cried over the story, and the father being deeply moved by it, took the parson into their confidence. In vain he preached at church next Sunday his favourite sermon about scandal, and inveighed against our propensity to think evil. We repent; we promise to do so no more; but when the next bad story comes about our neighbour we believe it. So did those kind, wretched Oakhurst folks believe what they heard about poor Harry Warrington.

Harry Warrington meanwhile was a great deal too well pleased with himself to know how ill his friends were thinking of him, and was pursuing a very idle and pleasant, if unprofitable, life, without having the least notion of the hubbub he was creating, and the dreadful repute in which he was held by many good men. Coming out from a match at tennis with Mr. Batts, and pleased with his play and all the world, Harry overtook Colonel Wolfe, who had been on one of his visits to the lady of his heart. Harry held out his hand, which the Colonel took, but the latter's salutation was so cold, that the young man could not help remarking it, and especially noting how Mr. Wolfe, in return for a fine bow from Mr. Batts's hat, scarcely touched his own with his forefinger. The tennis captain walked away looking somewhat disconcerted, Harry remaining behind to talk with his friend of Westerham. Mr. Wolfe walked by him for a while, very erect, silent, and cold.

"I have not seen you these many days," says Harry.

"You have had other companions," remarks Mr. Wolfe, curtly.

"But I had rather be with you than any of them," cries the young man.

"Indeed I might be better company for you than some of them," says the other.

"Is it Captain Batts you mean?" asked Harry.

"He is no favourite of mine, I own; he bore a rascally reputation when he was in the army, and I doubt has not mended it since he was turned out. You certainly might find a better friend than Captain Batts. Pardon the freedom which I take in saying so," says Mr. Wolfe, grimly.

"Friend! he is no friend: he only teaches me to play tennis: he is hand-in-glove with my lord, and all the people of fashion here who play."

"I am not a man of fashion," says Mr. Wolfe.

"My dear Colonel, what is the matter? Have I angered you in any way? You speak almost as if I had, and I am not conscious of having done anything to forfeit your regard," said Mr. Warrington.

"I will be free with you, Mr. Warrington," said the Colonel, gravely, "and tell you with frankness that I don't like some of your friends."

"Why, sure, they are men of the first rank and fashion in England," cries Harry, not choosing to be offended with his companion's bluntness.

"Exactly! They are men of too high rank and too great fashion for a hard-working poor soldier like me; and if you continue to live with such, believe me, you will find numbers of us humdrum people can't afford to keep such company. I am here, Mr. Warrington, paying my addresses to an honourable lady. I met you yesterday

openly walking with a French ballet-dancer, and you took off your hat. I must frankly tell you that I had rather you would not take off your hat when you go out in such company."

"Sir," said Mr. Warrington, growing very red, "do you mean that I am to forego the honour of Colonel Wolfe's acquaintance altogether?"

"I certainly shall request you to do so when you are in company with that person," said Colonel Wolfe, angrily; but he used a word not to be written at present, though Shakspeare puts it in the mouth of Othello.

"Great heavens! what a shame it is to speak so of any woman!" cries Mr. Warrington. "How dare any man say that that poor creature is not honest?"

"You ought to know best, sir," says the other, looking at Harry with some surprise, "or the world belies you very much."

"What ought I to know best? I see a poor little French dancer who is come hither with her mother, and is ordered by the doctors to drink the waters. I know that a person of my rank in life does not ordinarily keep company with people of hers; but really, Colonel Wolfe, are you so squeamish? Have I not heard you say that you did not value birth, and that all honest people ought to be equal? Why should I not give this little unprotected woman my arm? there are scarce half-a-dozen people here who can speak a word of her language. I can talk a little French, and she is welcome to it; and if Colonel Wolfe does not choose to touch his hat to me, when I am walking with her, by George! he may leave it alone," cried Harry, flushing up.

"You don't mean to say," says Mr. Wolfe, eyeing him, "that you don't know the woman's character?"

"Of course, sir, she is a dancer, and, I suppose, no better or worse than her neighbours. But I mean to say that, had she been a duchess, or your grandmother, I couldn't have respected her more."

"You don't mean to say that you did not win her at dice, from Lord March."

"At what!"

"At dice, from Lord March. Everybody knows the story. Not a person at the Wells is ignorant of it. I heard it but now, in the company of that good old Mr. Richardson, and the ladies were saying that you would be a character for a colonial Lovelace."

"What on earth else have they said about me?" asked Harry Warrington; and such stories as he knew the Colonel told. The most alarming accounts of his own wickedness and profligacy were laid before him. He was a corrupter of virtue, an habitual drunkard and gamester, a notorious blasphemer and freethinker, a fitting companion for my Lord March, finally, and the company into whose society he had fallen. "I tell you these things," said Mr. Wolfe, "because it is fair that you should know what is said of you, and because I do heartily believe, from your manner of meeting the last charge brought against you, that you are innocent on most of the other counts. I feel, Mr. Warrington, that I, for one, have been doing you a wrong; and sincerely ask you to pardon me."

Of course, Harry was eager to accept his friend's apology, and they shook hands with sincere cordiality this time. In respect of most of the charges brought against him, Harry rebutted them easily enough: as for the play, he owned to it. He thought that a gentleman should not refuse a fair challenge from other gen-

tlemen, if his means allowed him: and he never would play beyond his means. After winning considerably at first, he could afford to play large stakes, for he was playing with other people's money. Play, he thought, was fair,—it certainly was pleasant. Why, did not all England, except the Methodists, play? Had he not seen the best company at the Wells over the cards—his aunt amongst them?

Mr. Wolfe made no immediate comment upon Harry's opinion as to the persons who formed the best company at the Wells, but he frankly talked with the young man, whose own frankness had won him, and warned him that the life he was leading might be the pleasantest, but surely was not the most profitable of lives. "It can't be, sir," said the Colonel, "that a man is to pass his days at horse-racing and tennis, and his nights carousing or at cards. Sure every man was made to do some work; and a gentleman, if he has none, must make some. Do you know the laws of your country, Mr. Warrington? Being a great proprietor, you will doubtless one day be a magistrate at home. Have you travelled over the country, and made yourself acquainted with its trades and manufactures? These are fit things for a gentleman to study, and may occupy him as well as a cockfight or a cricket-match. Do you know anything of our profession? That, at least, you will allow is a noble one, and, believe me, there is plenty in it to learn, and suited, I should think, to you. I speak of it rather than of books and the learned professions, because, as far as I can judge, your genius does not lie that way. But honour is the aim of life," cried Mr. Wolfe, "and every man can serve his country one way or the other. Be sure, sir, that idle bread is the most

dangerous of all that is eaten; that cards and pleasure may be taken by way of pastime after work, but not instead of work, and all day. And do you know, Mr. Warrington, instead of being the Fortunate Youth, as all the world calls you, I think you are rather Warrington the Unlucky, for you are followed by daily idleness, daily flattery, daily temptation, and the Lord, I say, send you a good deliverance out of your good fortune."

Harry did not like to tell his aunt that afternoon why it was he looked so grave. He thought he would not drink, but there were some jolly fellows at the ordinary who passed the bottle round; and he meant not to play in the evening, but a fourth was wanted at his aunt's table, and how could he resist? He was the old lady's partner several times during the night, and he had Somebody's own luck to be sure; and once more he saw the dawn, and feasted on chickens and champagne at sunrise.

CHAPTER XXIX

IN WHICH HARRY CONTINUES TO ENJOY OTIUM SINE DIGNITATE

WHILST there were card-players enough to meet her at her lodgings and the assembly-rooms, Madame de Bernstein remained pretty contentedly at the Wells, scolding her niece, and playing her rubber. At Harry's age almost all places are pleasant, where you can have lively company, fresh air, and your share of sport and diversion. Even all pleasure is pleasant at twenty. We go out to meet it with alacrity, speculate upon its coming, and when its visit is announced, count the days until it and we shall come together. How very gently and coolly we regard it towards the close of Life's long season! Madam, don't you recollect your first ball; and does not your memory stray towards that happy past, sometimes, as you sit

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ornamenting the wall whilst your daughters are dancing? I, for my part, can remember when I thought it was delightful to walk three miles and back in the country to dine with old Captain Jones. Fancy liking to walk three miles, now, to dine with Jones and drink his half-pay port! No doubt it was bought from the little country-town wine-merchant, and cost but a small sum; but 'twas offered with a kindly welcome and youth gave it a flavour which no age of wine or man can impart to it now-a-days. *Viximus nuper.* I am not disposed to look so severely upon young Harry's conduct and idleness, as his friend the stern Colonel of the Twentieth Regiment. O blessed Idleness! Divine lazy Nymph! Reach me a novel as I lie in my dressing-gown at three o'clock in the afternoon; compound a sherry-cobbler for me, and bring me a cigar! Dear slatternly, smiling Enchantress! They may assail thee with bad names—swear thy character away, and call thee the Mother of Evil; but, for all that, thou art the best company in the world!

My Lord of March went away to the North; and my Lord Chesterfield, finding the Tunbridge waters did no good to his deafness, returned to his solitude at Blackheath; but other gentlemen remained to sport and take their pleasure, and Mr. Warrington had quite enough of companions at his ordinary at the "White Horse." He soon learned to order a French dinner as well as the best man of fashion out of St. James's; could talk to Monsieur Barbeau, in Monsieur B.'s native language, much more fluently than most other folks,—discovered a very elegant and decided taste in wines, and could distinguish between Clos Vougeot and Romanée with remarkable skill. He was the young King of the Wells,

of which the general frequenters were easy-going men of the world, who were by no means shocked at that reputation for gallantry and extravagance which Harry had got, and which had so frightened Mr. Wolfe.

Though our Virginian lived amongst the revellers, and swam and sported in the same waters with the loose fish, the boy had a natural shrewdness and honesty which kept him clear of the snares and baits which are commonly set for the unwary. He made very few foolish bets with the jolly idle fellows round about him, and the oldest hands found it difficult to take him in. He engaged in games out-doors and in, because he had a natural skill and aptitude for them, and was good to hold almost any match with any fair competitor. He was scrupulous to play only with those gentlemen whom he knew, and always to settle his own debts on the spot. He would have made but a very poor figure at a college examination; though he possessed prudence and fidelity, keen, shrewd perception, great generosity, and dauntless personal courage.

And he was not without occasions for showing of what stuff he was made. For instance, when that unhappy little Cattarina, who had brought him into so much trouble, carried her importunities beyond the mark at which Harry thought his generosity should stop; he withdrew from the advances of the Opera-House siren with perfect coolness and skill, leaving her to exercise her blandishments upon some more easy victim. In vain the mermaid's hysterical mother waited upon Harry, and vowed that a cruel bailiff had seized all her daughter's goods for debt, and that her venerable father was at present languishing in a London gaol. Harry declared that between himself and the bailiff

there could be no dealings, and that because he had had the good fortune to become known to Mademoiselle Cattarina, and to gratify her caprices by presenting her with various trinkets and knickknacks for which she had a fancy, he was not bound to pay the past debts of her family, and must decline being bail for her papa in London, or settling her outstanding accounts at Tunbridge. The Cattarina's mother first called him a monster and an ingrate, and then asked him, with a veteran smirk, why he did not take pay for the services he had rendered to the young person? At first, Mr. Warrington could not understand what the nature of the payment might be: but when that matter was explained by the old woman, the simple lad rose up in horror, to think that a woman should traffic in her child's dishonour, told her that he came from a country where the very savages would recoil from such a bargain; and, having bowed the old lady ceremoniously to the door, ordered Gumbo to mark her well, and never admit her to his lodgings again. No doubt she retired breathing vengeance against the Iroquois: no Turk or Persian, she declared, would treat a lady so: and she and her daughter retreated to London as soon as their anxious landlord would let them. Then Harry had his perils of gaming, as well as his perils of gallantry. A man who plays at bowls, as the phrase is, must expect to meet with rubbers. After dinner at the ordinary, having declined to play picquet any further with Captain Batts, and being roughly asked his reason for refusing, Harry fairly told the Captain that he only played with gentlemen who paid, like himself: but expressed himself so ready to satisfy Mr. Batts, as soon as their outstanding little account was settled, that the Captain declared him-

self satisfied *d'avance,* and straightway left the Wells without paying Harry or any other creditor. Also he had an occasion to show his spirit by beating a chairman who was rude to old Miss Whiffler one evening as she was going to the assembly: and finding that the calumny regarding himself and that unlucky opera-dancer was repeated by Mr. Hector Buckler, one of the fiercest frequenters of the Wells, Mr. Warrington stepped up to Mr. Buckler in the pump-room, where the latter was regaling a number of water-drinkers with the very calumny, and publicly informed Mr. Buckler that the story was a falsehood, and that he should hold any person accountable to himself who henceforth uttered it. So that though our friend, being at Rome, certainly did as Rome did, yet he showed himself to be a valorous and worthy Roman; and, *hurlant avec les loups,* was acknowledged by Mr. Wolfe himself to be as brave as the best of the wolves.

If that officer had told Colonel Lambert the stories which had given the latter so much pain, we may be sure that when Mr. Wolfe found his young friend was innocent, he took the first opportunity to withdraw the odious charges against him. And there was joy among the Lamberts, in consequence of the lad's acquittal—something, doubtless, of that pleasure, which is felt by higher natures than ours, at the recovery of sinners. Never had the little family been so happy—no, not even when they got the news of Brother Tom winning his scholarship—as when Colonel Wolfe rode over with the account of the conversation which he had with Harry Warrington. "Hadst thou brought me a regiment, James, I think I should not have been better pleased," said Mr. Lambert. Mrs. Lambert called to her daugh-

ters who were in the garden, and kissed them both when they came in, and cried out the good news to them. Hetty jumped for joy, and Theo performed some uncommonly brilliant operations upon the harpsichord that night; and when Dr. Boyle came in for his backgammon, he could not, at first, account for the illumination in all their faces, until the three ladies, in a happy chorus, told him how right he had been in his sermon, and how dreadfully they had wronged that poor dear, good young Mr. Warrington.

"What shall we do, my dear?" says the Colonel to his wife. "The hay is in, the corn won't be cut for a fortnight,—the horses have nothing to do. Suppose we . . ." And here he leans over the table and whispers in her ear.

"My dearest Martin! The very thing!" cries Mrs. Lambert, taking her husband's hand and pressing it.

"What's the very thing, mother?" cries young Charley, who is home for his Bartlemytide holidays.

"The very thing is to go to supper. Come, Doctor! We will have a bottle of wine to-night, and drink repentance to all who think evil."

"Amen," says the Doctor; "with all my heart!" And with this the worthy family went to their supper.

CHAPTER XXX

CONTAINS A LETTER TO VIRGINIA

HAVING repaired one day to his accustomed dinner at the "White Horse" ordinary, Mr. Warrington was pleased to see amongst the faces round the table the jolly good-looking countenance of Parson Sampson, who was regaling the company, when Henry entered, with stories and *bons mots*, which kept them in roars of laughter. Though he had not been in London for some months, the Parson had the latest London news, or what passed for such with the folks at the ordinary: what was doing in the King's house at Kensington; and what in the Duke's in Pall Mall: how Mr. Byng was behaving in prison, and who came to him: what were the odds at Newmarket, and who was the last reigning toast in Covent Garden;—the jolly Chaplain could give the company news upon all these points,—news that might not be very accurate indeed, but was as good as if it were for the country gentlemen who heard it. For suppose that my Lord Viscount Squanderfield was ruining himself for Mrs. Polly, and Sampson called her Mrs. Lucy? that it was

Lady Jane who was in love with the actor, and not Lady Mary? that it was Harry Hilton, of the Horse Grenadiers, who had the quarrel with Chevalier Solingen, at Marybone Garden, and not Tommy Ruffler, of the Foot Guards? The names and dates did not matter much. Provided the stories were lively and wicked, their correctness was of no great importance; and Mr. Sampson laughed and chattered away amongst his country gentlemen, charmed them with his spirits and talk, and drank his share of one bottle after another, for which his delighted auditory persisted in calling. A hundred years ago, the *Abbé* Parson, the clergyman who frequented the theatre, the tavern, the race-course, the world of fashion, was no uncommon character in English society: his voice might be heard the loudest in the hunting-field: he could sing the jolliest song at the "Rose" or the "Bedford Head," after the play was over at Covent Garden, and could call a main as well as any at the gaming-table.

It may have been modesty, or it may have been claret, which caused his reverence's rosy face to redden deeper, but when he saw Mr. Warrington enter, he whispered "Maxima debetur" to the laughing country squire who sat next him in his drab coat and gold-laced red waistcoat, and rose up from his chair and ran—nay, stumbled forward—in his haste to greet the Virginian: "My dear sir, my very dear sir, my conqueror of spades, and clubs, and hearts too, I am delighted to see your honour looking so fresh and well," cries the Chaplain.

Harry returned the clergyman's greeting with great pleasure: he was glad to see Mr. Sampson; he could also justly compliment his reverence upon his cheerful looks and rosy gills.

The squire in the drab coat knew Mr. Warrington; he made a place beside himself; he called out to the parson to return to his seat on the other side, and to continue his story about Lord Ogle and the grocer's wife in— Where he did not say, for his sentence was interrupted by a shout and an oath addressed to the parson for treading on his gouty toe.

The Chaplain asked pardon, hurriedly turned round to Mr. Warrington, and informed him, and the rest of the company indeed, that my Lord Castlewood sent his affectionate remembrances to his cousin, and had given special orders to him (Mr. Sampson) to come to Tunbridge Wells and look after the young gentleman's morals; that my Lady Viscountess and my Lady Fanny were gone to Harrogate for the waters; that Mr. Will had won his money at Newmarket, and was going on a visit to my Lord Duke; that Molly the housemaid was crying her eyes out about Gumbo, Mr. Warrington's valet;—in fine, all the news of Castlewood and its neighbourhood. Mr. Warrington was beloved by all the country round, Mr. Sampson told the company, managing to introduce the names of some persons of the very highest rank into his discourse. "All Hampshire had heard of his successes at Tunbridge, successes of every kind," says Mr. Sampson, looking particularly arch; my lord hoped, their ladyships hoped, Harry would not be spoilt for his quiet Hampshire home.

The guests dropped off one by one, leaving the young Virginian to his bottle of wine and the chaplain.

"Though I have had plenty," says the jolly chaplain, "that is no reason why I should not have plenty more," and he drank toast after toast, and bumper after

bumper, to the amusement of Harry, who always enjoyed his society.

By the time when Sampson had had his "plenty more," Harry, too, was become specially generous, warm-hearted, and friendly. A lodging?—why should Mr. Sampson go to the expense of an inn, when there was a room at Harry's quarters? The Chaplain's trunk was ordered thither, Gumbo was bidden to make Mr. Sampson comfortable—most comfortable; nothing would satisfy Mr. Warrington but that Sampson should go down to his stables and see his horses: he had several horses now; and when at the stable Sampson recognized his own horse, which Harry had won from him; and the fond beast whinnied with pleasure, and rubbed his nose against his old master's coat. Harry rapped out a brisk energetic expression or two, and vowed by Jupiter that Sampson should have his old horse back again: he would give him to Sampson, that he would; a gift which the Chaplain accepted by seizing Harry's hand, and blessing him,—by flinging his arms round the horse's neck, and weeping for joy there, weeping tears of Bordeaux and gratitude. Arm-in-arm the friends walked to Madame Bernstein's from the stable, of which they brought the odours into her ladyship's apartment. Their flushed cheeks and brightened eyes showed what their amusement had been. Many gentlemen's cheeks were in the habit of flushing in those days, and from the same cause.

Madame Bernstein received her nephew's chaplain kindly enough. The old lady relished Sampson's broad jokes and rattling talk from time to time, as she liked a highly spiced dish or a new entrée composed by her cook, upon its two or three first appearances. The only

amusement of which she did not grow tired, she owned, was cards. "The cards don't cheat," she used to say. "A bad hand tells you the truth to your face: and there is nothing so flattering in the world as a good suite of trumps." And when she was in a good humour, and sitting down to her favourite pastime, she would laughingly bid her nephew's chaplain say grace before the meal. Honest Sampson did not at first care to take a hand at Tunbridge Wells. Her ladyship's play was too high for him, he would own, slapping his pocket with a comical piteous look, and its contents had already been handed over to the fortunate youth at Castlewood. Like most persons of her age and indeed her sex, Madame Bernstein was not prodigal of money. I suppose it must have been from Harry Warrington, whose heart was overflowing with generosity as his purse with guineas, that the Chaplain procured a small stock of ready coin, with which he was presently enabled to appear at the card-table.

Our young gentleman welcomed Mr. Sampson to his coin, as to all the rest of the good things which he had gathered about him. 'Twas surprising how quickly the young Virginian adapted himself to the habits of life of the folks amongst whom he lived. His suits were still black, but of the finest cut and quality. "With a star and ribbon, and his stocking down, and his hair over his shoulder, he would make a pretty Hamlet," said the gay old Duchess Queensberry. "And I make no doubt he has been the death of a dozen Ophelias already, here and amongst the Indians," she added, thinking not at all the worse of Harry for his supposed successes among the fair. Harry's lace and linen were as fine as his aunt could desire. He purchased fine shaving-plate of the toy-shop women, and a couple of magnificent brocade

bed-gowns, in which his worship lolled at ease, and sipped his chocolate of a morning. He had swords and walking-canes, and French watches with painted backs and diamond settings, and snuff-boxes enamelled by artists of the same cunning nation. He had a levee of grooms, jockeys, tradesmen, daily waiting in his anteroom, and admitted one by one to him and Parson Sampson, over his chocolate, by Gumbo the groom of the chambers. We have no account of the number of men whom Mr. Gumbo now had under him. Certain it is that no single negro could have taken care of all the fine things which Mr. Warrington now possessed, let alone the horses and the post-chaise which his honour had bought. Also Harry instructed himself in the arts which became a gentleman in those days. A French fencing-master, and a dancing-master of the same nation, resided at Tunbridge during that season when Harry made his appearance: these men of science the young Virginian sedulously frequented, and acquired considerable skill and grace in the peaceful and warlike accomplishments which they taught. Ere many weeks were over he could handle the foils against his master or any frequenter of the fencing-school,—and, with a sigh, Lady Maria (who danced very elegantly herself) owned that there was no gentleman at Court who could walk a minuet more gracefully than Mr. Warrington. As for riding, though Mr. Warrington took a few lessons on the great horse from a riding-master who came to Tunbridge, he declared that their own Virginian manner was well enough for him, and that he saw no one amongst the fine folks and the jockeys who could ride better than his friend Colonel George Washington of Mount Vernon.

The obsequious Sampson found himself in better

quarters than he had enjoyed for ever so long a time. He knew a great deal of the world, and told a great deal more, and Harry was delighted with his stories, real or fancied. The man of twenty looks up to the man of thirty, admires the latter's old jokes, stale puns, and tarnished anecdotes, that are slopped with the wine of a hundred dinner-tables. Sampson's town and college pleasantries were all new and charming to the young Virginian. A hundred years ago,—no doubt there are no such people left in the world now,—there used to be grown men in London who loved to consort with fashionable youths entering life; to tickle their young fancies with merry stories; to act as Covent Garden Mentors and masters of ceremonies at the Round-house; to accompany lads to the gaming-table, and perhaps have an understanding with the punters; to drink lemonade to Master Hopeful's Burgundy, and to stagger into the streets with perfectly cool heads when my young lord reeled out to beat the watch. Of this, no doubt extinct race, Mr. Sampson was a specimen: and a great comfort it is to think (to those who choose to believe the statement) that in Queen Victoria's reign there are no flatterers left, such as existed in the reign of her royal great-grandfather, no parasites pandering to the follies of young men; in fact, that all the toads have been eaten off the face of the island, (except one or two that are found in stones, where they have lain *perdus* these hundred years,) and the toad-eaters have perished for lack of nourishment.

With some sauce, as I read, the above-mentioned animals are said to be exceedingly fragrant, wholesome, and savoury eating. Indeed, no man could look more rosy and healthy, or flourish more cheerfully, than

friend Sampson upon the diet He became our young friend's confidential leader, and, from the following letter, which is preserved in the Warrington correspondence, it will be seen that Mr. Harry not only had dancing and fencing-masters, but likewise a tutor, chaplain, and secretary:—

"TO MRS. ESMOND WARRINGTON, OF CASTLEWOOD,

"AT HER HOUSE AT RICHMOND, VIRGINIA.

"*Mrs. Bligh's Lodgings, Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, August 25th*, 1756.

"HONOURED MADAM,—Your honoured letter of 20 June, per Mr. Trail of Bristol, has been forwarded to me duly, and I have to thank your goodness and kindness for the good advice which you are pleased to give me, as also for the remembrances of *dear home*, which I shall love never the worse for having been to the *home of our ancestors in England.*

"I writ you a letter by the last monthly packet, informing my honoured mother of the little accident I had on the road hither, and of the kind friends who I found and whom took me in. Since then I have been profiting of the fine weather and the good company here, and have made many friends among our nobility, whose acquaintance I am sure you will not be sorry that I should make. Among their lordships I may mention the famous Earl of Chesterfield, late Ambassador to Holland, and Viceroy of the Kingdom of Ireland; the Earl of March and Ruglen, who will be Duke of Queensberry at the death of his Grace; and her Grace the Duchess, a celebrated beauty of the Queen's time, when she remembers my grandpapa at Court. These and many more persons of the first fashion attend my aunt's assemblies, which are the most crowded at this crowded place. Also on my way hither I stayed at Westerham, at the house of an officer, Lieut.-Gen. Wolfe, who served with my grand-

father and General Webb in the famous wars of the Duke of Marlborough. Mr. Wolfe has a son, Lieut.-Col. James Wolfe, engaged to be married to a beautiful lady now in this place, Miss Lowther of the North—and though but 30 years old he is looked up to as much as any officer in the whole army, and hath served with honour under his Royal Highness the Duke wherever our arms have been employed.

"I thank my honoured mother for announcing to me that a quarter's allowance of £52.10 will be paid me by Mr. Trail. I am in no present want of cash, and by practising a rigid economy, which will be necessary (as I do not disguise) for the maintenance of horses, Gumbo, and the equipage and apparel requisite *for a young gentleman of good family*, hope to be able to maintain my credit without unduly trespassing upon yours. The linnen and clothes which I brought with me will with due care last for some years—as you say. 'Tis not quite so fine as worn here by persons of fashion, and I may have to purchase a few *very* fine shirts for *great days:* but those I have are excellent for daily wear.

"I am thankful that I have been quite without occasion to use your excellent family pills. Gumbo hath taken them with great benefit, who grows fat and saucy upon English beef, ale, and air. He sends his humble duty to his mistress, and prays Mrs. Mountain to remember him to all his fellow-servants, especially Dinah and Lily, for whom he has bought posey-rings at Tunbridge Fair.

"Besides partaking of all the pleasures of the place, I hope my honoured mother will believe that I have not been unmindful *of my education.* I have had masters in fencing and dancing, and my Lord Castlewood's chaplain, the Reverend Mr. Sampson, having come hither to drink the waters, has been so good as to take a vacant room at my lodging. Mr. S. breakfasts with me, and we read together of a morning—he saying that I am not *quite such a dunce* as I used to appear at home. We have read in Mr. Rapin's History, Dr. Barrow's Sermons, and for amuse-

ment, Shakspeare, Mr. Pope's Homer, and (in French) the translation of an Arabian Work of Tales, very diverting. Several men *of learning* have been staying here besides the persons of fashion; and amongst the former was Mr. Richardson, the author of the famous books which you and Mountain and my dearest brother used to love so. He was pleased when I told him that his works were in your closet in Virginia, and begged me to convey his respectful compliments to my lady mother. Mr. R. is a short fat man, with little of the *fire of genius* visible in his eye or person.

"My aunt and my cousin, the Lady Maria, desire their affectionate compliments to you, and with best regards for Mountain, to whom I enclose a note, I am,

"Honoured Madam,
"Your dutiful Son,
"H. Esmond Warrington."

Note in Madam Esmond's Handwriting.

"From my son. Received October 15 at Richmond. Sent 16 jars preserved peaches, 224 lbs. best tobacco, 24 finest hams, per "Royal William" of Liverpool, 8 jars peaches, 12 hams for my nephew, the Rt. Honourable the Earl of Castlewood. 4 jars, 6 hams for the Baroness Bernstein, ditto ditto for Mrs. Lambert of Oakhurst, Surrey, and ½ cwt. tobacco. Packet of infallible Family Pills for Gumbo. My Papa's large silver-gilt shoe-buckles for H., and red silver-laced saddle-cloth.

II. (enclosed in No. I.)

"For Mrs. Mountain.

"What do you *mien*, you silly old Mountain, by sending an order for your poor old divadends dew at Xmas? I'd have you to know I don't want your £7. 10, and have *toar your order up* into 1000 *bitts*. I've plenty of money. But I'm *ableaged* to you all same. A kiss to Fanny from "Your loving

"Harry."

Note in Madam Esmond's Handwriting.

"This note, which I desired M. to show to me, proves that she *hath a good heart*, and that she wished to show her gratitude to the family, by giving up her half-yearly divd. (on 500*l.* 3 per ct.) to my boy. Hence I reprimanded her *very slightly* for daring to send money to Mr. E. Warrington, unknown to his mother. Note to Mountain not so well spelt as letter to me.

"Mem. to write to Revd. Mr. Sampson desire to know what *theolog.* books he reads with H. Recommend Law, Baxter, Drelincourt.—Request H. to say his catechism to Mr. S., which he has never quite been able to master. By next ship peaches (3), tobacco ½ cwt. Hams for Mr. S."

The mother of the Virginians and her sons have long, long since passed away. So how are we to account for the fact, that of a couple of letters sent under one enclosure and by one packet, one should be well spelt, and the other not entirely orthographical? Had Harry found some wonderful instructor, such as exists in the present lucky times, and who would improve his writing in six lessons? My view of the case, after deliberately examining the two notes, is this: No. 1, in which there appears a trifling grammatical slip ("the kind friends *who* I found and *whom* took me in,") must have been re-written from a rough copy which had probably undergone the supervision of a tutor or friend. The more artless composition, No. 2, was not referred to the scholar who prepared No. 1 for the maternal eye, and to whose corrections of "who" and "whom" Mr. Warrington did not pay very close attention. Who knows how he may have been disturbed? A pretty milliner may have attracted Harry's attention out of window—a dancing bear with pipe and tabor may have passed along

the common—a jockey come under his windows to show off a horse there? There are some days when any of us may be ungrammatical and spell ill. Finally, suppose Harry did not care to spell so elegantly for Mrs. Mountain as for his lady-mother, what affair is that of the present biographer, century, reader? And as for your objection that Mr. Warrington, in the above communication to his mother, showed some little hypocrisy and reticence in his dealings with that venerable person, I dare say, young folks, you in your time have written more than one prim letter to your papas and mammas in which not quite all the transactions of your lives were narrated, or if narrated, were exhibited in the most favourable light for yourselves—I dare say, old folks! you, in your time, were not altogether more candid. There must be a certain distance between me and my son Jacky. There must be a respectful, an amiable, a virtuous hypocrisy between us. I do not in the least wish that he should treat me as his equal, that he should contradict me, take my arm-chair, read the newspaper first at breakfast, ask unlimited friends to dine when I have a party of my own, and so forth. No; where there is not equality, there must be hypocrisy. Continue to be blind to my faults; to hush still as mice when I fall asleep after dinner; to laugh at my old jokes; to admire my sayings; to be astonished at the impudence of those unbelieving reviewers; to be dear filial humbugs, O my children! In my castle I am king. Let all my royal household back before me. 'Tis not their natural way of walking, I know: but a decorous, becoming, and modest behaviour highly agreeable to me. Away from me they may do, nay, they *do* do, what they like. They may jump, skip, dance, trot, tumble over head and heels,

and kick about freely, when they are out of the presence of my majesty. Do not then, my dear young friends, be surprised at your mother and aunt when they cry out, "Oh, it was highly immoral and improper of Mr. Warrington to be writing home humdrum demure letters to his dear mamma, when he was playing all sorts of merry pranks!"—but drop a curtsey, and say, "Yes, dear grandmamma, (or aunt, as may be,) it was very wrong of him: and I suppose you never had your fun when *you* were young." Of course, she didn't! And the sun never shone, and the blossoms never budded, and the blood never danced, and the fiddles never sang, in her spring-time. *Eh, Babet! mon lait de poule et mon bonnet de nuit!* Ho, Betty! my gruel and my slippers! And go, ye frisky, merry little souls! and dance, and have your merry little supper of cakes and ale!

CHAPTER XXXI

THE BEAR AND THE LEADER

OUR candid readers know the real state of the case regarding Harry Warrington and that luckless Cattarina; but a number of the old ladies at Tunbridge Wells supposed the Virginian to be as dissipated as any young English nobleman of the highest quality, and Madame de Bernstein was especially incredulous about her nephew's innocence. It was the old lady's firm belief that Harry was leading not only a merry life but a wicked one, and her wish was father to the thought that the lad might be no better than his neighbours. An old Roman herself, she liked her nephew to do as Rome did. All the scandal regarding Mr. Warrington's Lovelace adventures she eagerly and complacently accepted. We have seen how, on one or two occasions, he gave tea and music to the company at the Wells; and he was so gallant and amiable to the

ladies (to ladies of a much better figure and character than the unfortunate Cattarina), that Madame Bernstein ceased to be disquieted regarding the silly love affair which had had a commencement at Castlewood, and relaxed in her vigilance over Lady Maria. Some folks—many old folks—are too selfish to interest themselves long about the affairs of their neighbours. The Baroness had her trumps to think of, her dinners, her twinges of rheumatism: and her suspicions regarding Maria and Harry, lately so lively, now dozed, and kept a careless, unobservant watch. She may have thought that the danger was over, or she may have ceased to care whether it existed or not, or that artful Maria, by her conduct, may have quite cajoled, soothed, and misguided the old Dragon, to whose charge she was given over. At Maria's age, nay, earlier indeed, maidens have learnt to be very sly, and at Madame Bernstein's time of life, dragons are not so fierce and alert. They cannot turn so readily, some of their old teeth have dropped out, and their eyes require more sleep than they needed in days when they were more active, venomous, and dangerous. I, for my part, know a few female dragons *de par le monde,* and as I watch them and remember what they were, admire the softening influence of years upon these whilom destroyers of man and womankind. Their scales are so soft that any knight with a moderate power of thrust can strike them: their claws, once strong enough to tear out a thousand eyes, only fall with a feeble pat that scarce raises the skin: their tongues, from their toothless old gums, dart a venom which is rather disagreeable than deadly. See them trailing their languid tails, and crawling home to their caverns at roosting time! How

weak are their powers of doing injury! their maleficence how feeble! How changed are they since the brisk days when their eyes shot wicked fire; their tongue spat poison; their breath blasted reputation; and they gobbled up a daily victim at least!

If the good folks at Oakhurst could not resist the testimony which was brought to them regarding Harry's ill-doings, why should Madame Bernstein, who in the course of her long days had had more experience of evil than all the Oakhurst family put together, be less credulous than they? Of course every single old woman of her ladyship's society believed every story that was told about Mr. Harry Warrington's dissipated habits, and was ready to believe as much more ill of him as you please. When the little dancer went back to London, as she did, it was because that heartless Harry deserted her. He deserted her for somebody else, whose name was confidently given,—whose name!—whose half-dozen names the society at Tunbridge Wells would whisper about; where there congregated people of all ranks and degrees, women of fashion, women of reputation, of demi-reputation, of virtue, of no virtue,—all mingling in the same rooms, dancing to the same fiddles, drinking out of the same glasses at the Wells, and alike in search of health, or society, or pleasure. A century ago, and our ancestors, the most free or the most strait-laced, met together at a score of such merry places as that where our present scene lies, and danced, and frisked, and gamed, and drank at Epsom, Bath, Tunbridge, Harrogate, as they do at Hombourg and Baden now.

Harry's bad reputation then comforted his old aunt excedingly, and eased her mind in respect to the boy's

passion for Lady Maria. So easy was she in her mind, that when the chaplain said he came to escort her ladyship home, Madame Bernstein did not even care to part from her niece. She preferred rather to keep her under her eye, to talk to her about her wicked young cousin's wild extravagances, to whisper to her that boys would be boys, to confide to Maria her intention of getting a proper wife for Harry,—some one of a suitable age,—some one with a suitable fortune,—all which pleasantries poor Maria had to bear with as much fortitude as she could muster.

There lived, during the last century, a certain French duke and marquis, who distinguished himself in Europe, and America likewise, and has obliged posterity by leaving behind him a choice volume of memoirs, which the gentle reader is specially warned not to consult. Having performed the part of Don Juan in his own country, in ours, and in other parts of Europe, he has kindly noted down the names of many court-beauties who fell victims to his powers of fascination; and very pleasant reading no doubt it must be for the grandsons and descendants of the fashionable persons amongst whom our brilliant nobleman moved, to find the names of their ancestresses adorning M. le Duc's sprightly pages, and their frailties recorded by the candid writer who caused them.

In the course of the peregrinations of this nobleman, he visited North America, and, as had been his custom in Europe, proceeded straightway to fall in love. And curious it is to contrast the elegant refinements of European society, where, according to Monseigneur, he had but to lay seige to a woman in order to vanquish her, with the simple lives and habits of the colonial folks,

amongst whom this European enslaver of hearts did not, it appears, make a single conquest. Had he done so, he would as certainly have narrated his victories in Pennsylvania and New England, as he described his successes in this and his own country. Travellers in America have cried out quite loudly enough against the rudeness and barbarism of Transatlantic manners; let the present writer give the humble testimony of his experience that the conversation of American gentlemen is generally modest, and, to the best of his belief, the lives of the women pure.

We have said that Mr. Harry Warrington brought his colonial modesty along with him to the old country; and though he could not help hearing the free talk of the persons amongst whom he lived, and who were men of pleasure and the world, he sat pretty silent himself in the midst of their rattle; never indulged in *double entendre* in his conversation with women; had no victories over the sex to boast of; and was shy and awkward when he heard such narrated by others.

This youthful modesty Mr. Sampson had remarked during his intercourse with the lad at Castlewood, where Mr. Warrington had more than once shown himself quite uneasy whilst Cousin Will was telling some of his choice stories; and my lord had curtly rebuked his brother, bidding him keep his jokes for the ushers' table at Kensington, and not give needless offence to their kinsman. Hence the exclamation of "Reverentia pueris," which the Chaplain had addressed to his neighbour at the ordinary on Harry's first appearance there. Mr. Sampson, if he had not strength sufficient to do right himself, at least had grace enough not to offend innocent young gentlemen by his cynicism.

The Chaplain was touched by Harry's gift of the horse; and felt a genuine friendliness towards the lad. "You see, sir," says he, "I am of the world, and must do as the rest of the world does. I have led a rough life, Mr. Warrington, and can't afford to be more particular than my neighbours. Video meliora, deteriora sequor, as we said at college. I have got a little sister, who is at boarding-school, not very far from here, and, as I keep a decent tongue in my head when I am talking with my little Patty, and expect others to do as much, sure I may try and do as much by you."

The Chaplain was loud in his praises of Harry to his aunt, the old Baroness. She liked to hear him praised. She was as fond of him as she could be of anything; was pleased in his company, with his good looks, his manly courageous bearing, his blushes, which came so readily, his bright eyes, his deep youthful voice. His shrewdness and simplicity constantly amused her; she would have wearied of him long before, had he been clever, or learned, or witty, or other than he was. "We must find a good wife for him, chaplain," she said to Mr. Sampson. "I have one or two in my eye, who, I think, will suit him. We must set him up here; he never will bear going back to his savages again, or to live with his little Methodist of a mother."

Now about this point Mr. Sampson, too, was personally anxious, and had also a wife in his eye for Harry. I suppose he must have had some conversations with his lord at Castlewood, whom we have heard expressing some intention of complimenting his chaplain with a good living or other provision, in event of his being able to carry out his lordship's wishes regarding a marriage for Lady Maria. If his good offices

could help that anxious lady to a husband, Sampson was ready to employ them: and he now waited to see in what most effectual manner he could bring his influence to bear.

Sampson's society was most agreeable, and he and his young friend were intimate in the course of a few hours. The parson rejoiced in high spirits, good appetite, good humour; pretended to no sort of squeamishness, and indulged in no sanctified hypocritical conversation; nevertheless, he took care not to shock his young friend by any needless outbreaks of levity or immorality of talk, initiating his pupil, perhaps from policy, perhaps from compunction, only into the minor mysteries, as it were; and not telling him the secrets with which the unlucky adept himself was only too familiar. With Harry, Sampson was only a brisk, lively, jolly companion, ready for any drinking bout, or any sport, a cock-fight, a shooting-match, a game at cards, or a gallop across the common; but his conversation was decent, and he tried much more to amuse the young man, than to lead him astray. The Chaplain was quite successful: he had immense animal spirits as well as natural wit, and aptitude as well as experience in that business of toad-eater which had been his calling and livelihood from his very earliest years,—ever since he first entered college as a servitor, and cast about to see by whose means he could make his fortune in life. That was but satire just now, when we said there were no toad-eaters left in the world. There are many men of Sampson's profession now, doubtless; nay, little boys at our public schools are sent thither at the earliest age, instructed by their parents, and put out apprentices to toad-eating. But the flattery is not so manifest as it used to be a hun-

dred years since. Young men and old have hangers-on, and led-captains, but they assume an appearance of equality, borrow money, or swallow their toads in private, and walk abroad arm-in-arm with the great man, and call him by his name without his title. In those good old times, when Harry Warrington first came to Europe, a gentleman's toad-eater pretended to no airs of equality at all; openly paid court to his patron, called him by that name to other folks, went on his errands for him,—any sort of errands which the patron might devise,—called him Sir in speaking to him, stood up in his presence until bidden to sit down, and flattered him *ex officio*. Mr. Sampson did not take the least shame in speaking of Harry as his young patron,—as a young Virginian nobleman recommended to him by his other noble patron, the Earl of Castlewood. He was proud of appearing at Harry's side, and as his humble retainer, in public talked about him to the company, gave orders to Harry's tradesmen, from whom, let us hope, he received a percentage in return for his recommendations, performed all the functions of aide-de-camp—others, if our young gentleman demanded them from the obsequious divine, who had gaily discharged the duties of *ami du prince* to ever so many young men of fashion, since his own entrance into the world. It must be confessed that, since his arrival in Europe, Mr. Warrington had not been uniformly lucky in the friendships which he had made.

"What a reputation, sir, they have made for you in this place!" cries Mr. Sampson, coming back from the coffee-house to his patron. "Monsieur de Richelieu was nothing to you!"

"How do you mean, Monsieur de Richelieu?—Never

was at Minorca in my life," says downright Harry, who had not heard of those victories at home which made the French duke famous.

Mr. Sampson explained. The pretty widow Patcham who had just arrived was certainly desperate about Mr. Warrington: her way of going on at the rooms, the night before, proved that. As for Mrs. Hooper, that was a known case, and the Alderman had fetched his wife back to London for no other reason. It was the talk of the whole Wells.

"Who says so?" cries out Harry, indignantly. "I should like to meet the man who dares say so, and confound the villain!"

"I should not like to show him to you," says Mr. Sampson, laughing. "It might be the worse for him."

"It's a shame to speak with such levity about the character of ladies or of gentlemen, either," continues Mr. Warrington, pacing up and down the room in a fume.

"So I told them," says the Chaplain, wagging his head and looking very much moved and very grave, though, if the truth were known, it had never come into his mind at all to be angry at hearing charges of this nature against Harry.

"It's a shame, I say, to talk away the reputation of any man or woman as people do here. Do you know, in our country, a fellow's ears would not be safe; and a little before I left home, three brothers shot down a man, for having spoken ill of their sister."

"Serve the villain right!" cries Sampson.

"Already they have had that calumny about me set a-going here, Sampson,—about me and the poor little French dancing-girl."

"I have heard," says Mr. Sampson, shaking powder out of his wig.

"Wicked; wasn't it?"

"Abominable."

"They said the very same thing about my Lord March. Isn't it shameful?"

"Indeed it is," says Mr. Sampson, preserving a face of wonderful gravity.

"I don't know what I should do if these stories were to come to my mother's ears. It would break her heart, I do believe it would. Why, only a few days before you came, a military friend of mine, Mr. Wolfe, told me how the most horrible lies were circulated about me. Good heavens! What do they think a gentleman of my name and country can be capable of—I a seducer of women? They might as well say I was a horse-stealer or a housebreaker. I vow if I hear any man say so, I'll have his ears!"

"I have read, sir, that the Grand Seignior of Turkey has bushels of ears sometimes sent in to him," says Mr. Sampson, laughing. "If you took all those that had heard scandal against you or others, what baskets you would fill!"

"And so I would, Sampson, as soon as look at 'em:—any fellow's who said a word against a lady or a gentleman of honour!" cries the Virginian.

"If you'll go down to the Well, you'll find a harvest of 'em. I just came from there. It was the high tide of Scandal. Detraction was at its height. And you may see the *nymphas discentes* and the *aures satyrorum acutas,*" cries the Chaplain, with a shrug of his shoulders.

"That may be as you say, Sampson," Mr. Warring-

ton replies; "but if ever I hear any man speak against my character I'll punish him. Mark that."

"I shall be very sorry for his sake, that I should; for you'll mark him in a way he won't like, sir; and I know you are a man of your word."

"You may be sure of that, Sampson. And now shall we go to dinner, and afterwards to my Lady Trumpington's tea?"

"You know, sir, I can't resist a card or a bottle," says Mr. Sampson. "Let us have the last first and then the first shall come last." And with this the two gentlemen went off to their accustomed place of refection.

That was an age in which wine-bibbing was more common than in our politer time; and, especially since the arrival of General Braddock's army in his native country, our young Virginian had acquired rather a liking for the filling of bumpers and the calling of toasts; having heard that it was a point of honour among the officers never to decline a toast or a challenge. So Harry and his chaplain drank their claret in peace and plenty, naming, as the simple custom was, some favourite lady with each glass.

The Chaplain had reasons of his own for desiring to know how far the affair between Harry and my Lady Maria had gone; whether it was advancing, or whether it was ended; and he and his young friend were just warm enough with the claret to be able to talk with that great eloquence, that candour, that admirable friendliness, which good wine taken in a rather injudicious quantity inspires. O kindly harvests of the Aquitanian grape! O sunny banks of Garonne! O friendly caves of Gledstane, where the dusky flasks lie recondite! May we not say a word of thanks for all the pleasure we owe

the young toper, looking very proud and handsome. "The young lady whose name I mentioned hath lived in our family since her infancy, and I would shoot the man who did her a wrong;—by heaven, I would!"

"Your sentiments do you honour! Let me shake hands with you! I *will* shake hands with you, Mr. Warrington," cried the enthusiastic Sampson. "And let me tell you, 'tis the grasp of honest friendship offered you, and not merely the poor retainer paying court to the wealthy patron. No! with such liquor as this, all men are equal;—faith, all men are rich, whilst it lasts! and Tom Sampson is as wealthy with his bottle as your honour with all the acres of your principality!"

"Let us have another bottle of riches," says Harry, with a laugh. "Encore du cachet jaune, mon bon Monsieur Barbeau!" and exit Monsieur Barbeau to the caves below.

"Another bottle of riches! Capital, capital! How beautifully you speak French, Mr. Harry."

"I *do* speak it well," says Harry. "At least, when I speak Monsieur Barbeau understands me well enough."

"You do everything well, I think. You succeed in whatever you try. That is why they have fancied here you have won the hearts of so many women, sir."

"There you go again about the women! I tell you I don't like these stories about women. Confound me, Sampson, why is a gentleman's character to be blackened so?"

"Well, at any rate, there is one, unless my eyes deceive me very much indeed, sir!" cries the Chaplain.

"Whom do you mean?" asked Harry, flushing very red.

"Nay. I name no names. It isn't for a poor chap-

lain to meddle with his betters' doings, or to know their thoughts," says Mr. Sampson.

"Thoughts! *what* thoughts, Sampson?"

"I fancied I saw, on the part of a certain lovely and respected lady at Castlewood, a preference exhibited. I fancied, on the side of a certain distinguished young gentleman, a strong liking manifested itself: but I may have been wrong, and ask pardon."

"Oh, Sampson, Sampson!" broke out the young man. "I tell you I am miserable. I tell you I have been longing for some one to confide in, or ask advice of. You *do* know, then, that there has been something going on—something between me and—help Mr. Sampson, Monsieur Barbeau—and—some one else?"

"I have watched it this month past," says the Chaplain.

"Confound me, sir, do you mean you have been a spy on me?" says the other hotly.

"A spy! You made little disguise of the matter, Mr. Warrington, and her ladyship wasn't a much better hand at deceiving. You were always together. In the shrubberies, in the walks, in the village, in the galleries of the house,—you always found a pretext for being together, and plenty of eyes besides mine watched you."

"Gracious powers! What *did* you see, Sampson?" cries the lad.

"Nay, sir, 'tis forbidden to kiss and tell. I say so again," says the Chaplain.

The young man turned very red. "Oh, Sampson!" he cried, "can I—can I confide in you?"

"Dearest sir—dear generous youth—you know I would shed my heart's blood for you!" exclaims the

Chaplain, squeezing his patron's hand, and turning a brilliant pair of eyes ceiling-wards.

"Oh, Sampson! I tell you I am miserable. With all this play and wine, whilst I have been here, I tell you I have been trying to drive away care. I own to you that when we were at Castlewood there was things passed between a certain lady and me."

The parson gave a slight whistle over his glass of Bordeaux.

"And they've made me wretched, those things have. I mean, you see, that if a gentleman has given his word, why, it's his word, and he must stand by it, you know. I mean that I thought I loved her,—and so I do very much, and she's a most dear, kind, darling, affectionate creature, and very handsome, too,—quite beautiful; but then, you know, our ages, Sampson! Think of our ages, Sampson! She's as old as my mother!"

"Who would never forgive you?"

"I don't intend to let anybody meddle in my affairs, not Madam Esmond nor anybody else," cries Harry: "but you see, Sampson, she *is* old—and, oh, hang it! Why did Aunt Bernstein tell me—"

"Tell you what?"

"Something I can't divulge to anybody, something that tortures me!"

"Not about the—the—" the Chaplain paused: he was going to say about her ladyship's little affair with the French dancing-master; about other little anecdotes affecting her character. But he had not drunk wine enough to be quite candid, or too much, and was past the real moment of virtue.

"Yes, yes, every one of 'em false—every one of 'em!" shrieks out Harry.

"Great powers, what do you mean?" asks his friend.

"These, sir, these!" says Harry, beating a tattoo on his own white teeth. "I didn't know it when I asked her. I swear I didn't know it. Oh, it's horrible—it's horrible! and it has caused me nights of agony, Sampson. My dear old grandfather had a set, a Frenchman at Charleston made them for him, and we used to look at 'em grinning in a tumbler, and when they were out, his jaws used to fall in—I never thought *she* had 'em."

"Had *what*, sir?" again asked the Chaplain.

"Confound it, sir, don't you see I mean *teeth?*" says Harry, rapping the table.

"Nay, only two."

"And how the devil do you know, sir?" asks the young man, fiercely.

"I—I had it from her maid. She had two teeth knocked out by a stone which cut her lip a little, and they have been replaced."

"Oh, Sampson, do you mean to say they ain't *all* sham ones?" cries the boy.

"But two, sir, at least so Peggy told me, and she would just as soon have blabbed about the whole two and thirty—the rest are as sound as yours, which are beautiful."

"And her hair, Sampson, is that all right, too?" asks the young gentleman.

"'Tis lovely—I have seen that. I can take my oath to that. Her ladyship can sit upon it; and her figure is very fine; and her skin is as white as snow; and her heart is the kindest that ever was; and I know—that is, I feel sure—it is very tender about you, Mr. Warrington."

"Oh, Sampson! heaven—heaven bless you! What a

weight you've taken off my mind with those—those—never mind them! Oh, Sam! How happy—that is, no, no—oh, how miserable I am! She's as old as Madam Esmond—by George she is—she's as old as my mother. You wouldn't have a fellow marry a woman as old as his mother? It's too bad: by George it is. It's too bad." And here, I am sorry to say, Harry Esmond Warrington, Esquire, of Castlewood, in Virginia, began to cry. The delectable point, you see, must have been passed several glasses ago.

"You don't want to marry her, then?" asks the Chaplain.

"What's that to you, sir? I've promised her, and an Esmond—a *Virginia* Esmond, mind that—Mr. What's your name—Sampson—has but his word!" The sentiment was noble, but delivered by Harry with rather a doubtful articulation.

"Mind you, I said a Virginia Esmond," continued poor Harry, lifting up his finger, "I don't mean the younger branch here. I don't mean Will, who robbed me about the horse, and whose bones I'll break. I give you Lady Maria—heaven bless her, and heaven bless *you,* Sampson, and you deserve to be a bishop, old boy!"

"There are letters between you, I suppose?" says Sampson.

"Letters! Dammy, she's always writing me letters! —never gets me into a window but she sticks one in my cuff. Letters, that *is* a good idea. Look here! Here's letters!" And he threw down a pocket-book containing a heap of papers of the poor lady's composition.

"Those *are* letters, indeed. What a post-bag!" says the Chaplain.

"But any man who touches them—dies—dies on the

spot!" shrieks Harry, starting from his seat, and reeling towards his sword; which he draws, and then stamps with his foot, and says, "Ha! ha!" and then lunges at M. Barbeau, who skips away from the lunge behind the Chaplain, who looks rather alarmed. And in my mind I behold an exciting picture of the lad, with his hair dishevelled, raging about the room *flamberge au vent,* and pinking the affrighted innkeeper and chaplain. But oh, to think of him stumbling over a stool, and prostrated by an enemy who has stole away his brains! Come, Gumbo! and help your master to bed!

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